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THE

SECOND ANNUAL REPORTS

OF THE

BOSTON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

READ AT THE

SECOND PUBLIC MEETING OF THE SOCIETY,

DECEMBER 11th, 1828.

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BOSTON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The second annual public meeting of this interesting institution, was held on the evening of the 11th of December, at Mr Ware's church in Boston. After the devotional services, conducted by Mr Motte, the secretaries of the society, Mr Gray and Dr Flagg, read the reports which follow this notice. The President, Hon. Jonathan Philips, then addressed the meeting in a very impressive manner. He spoke of the nature and methods of early education, and of the joy he felt in the success that had so far attended the efforts of the society. He was followed by the Rev. Mr Whitman of Waltham, who described the benefits resulting from Sunday schools, as connected with manufacturing establishments. Rev. Mr May of Brooklyn, Connecticut, bore his testimony to their happy effects on agricultural communities, and, in the course of his remarks, adverted particularly to their indirect influence upon parents through the children, which he had often found to be in a high degree salutary. Dr Channing expressed his conviction of the useful tendency of these institutions, when well conducted, and made some discriminative observa-

tions, of great moment, on the ends of juvenile instruction, and the modes of imparting it. He believed that valuable improvements were to be looked for in these respects. He rejoiced in the perfect freedom that characterized the operations of this society, as he anticipated much good from the independent exercise and unrestrained communication of thought which it allowed. He dwelt upon the peculiar advantages of Sunday schools to the poor, and suggested a wish for greater sympathy between them and the rich. Dr Flagg gave some explanations that seemed to be called for, and glanced at the difficulty and importance of obtaining always well educated persons for teachers. Professor Follen, of the University, interested the meeting with remarks on the benefit which the teachers themselves derived from their efforts to impart religious instruction to the children of these schools. He knew of no better means of personal improvement. For himself, he could say that he was not aware of any pursuit from which he had received greater advantage. Rev. Mr Pierpont confessed that he had once doubted the utility of these institutions. He wished now to declare publicly that his views were changed. He referred to the good effects of the one established in his parish, and spoke of the importance of having the children of the different ranks in life brought together into the same school for religious culture, as they were in his own society. He concluded with commendatory remarks on the devotedness of females to the useful and honorable employment of Sunday school teaching. Dr Tuckerman was able, from the relation he sustained to the poor of the City, to attest, in strong terms, the valuable influence of Sunday

schools upon this portion of the community, and insisted upon teachers frequently visiting those families of this class, to which their pupils respectively belonged. Rev. Mr Gannett was strongly in favor of the schools as means of nourishing the devotional spirit of the teachers, felt deeply the necessity of vital piety to the success of the religious instructer, and pressed these topics upon the attention of the meeting in a strain of impassioned eloquence.

After the addresses, of which we have given but a very imperfect account, resolutions were passed to accept the Reports, and to have them published. The meeting was large and respectable, and its proceedings were marked with great intelligence and an excellent spirit. It was gratifying to see so many present from a distance, and to learn that they entered so deeply and cordially, into the designs of the Society. These meetings cannot but be useful for the sympathy they awaken, and the interchange of thought they produce. No one, we think, could have gone away from the one we have noticed, without a stronger conviction of the utility of Sunday schools, and a warmer zeal for their prosperity. We congratulate the society on their success thus far, and invoke the blessing of Heaven on their future endeavors.

THE RECORDING SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SEVERAL SCHOOLS IN THIS CITY,

IN CONNEXION WITH THE BOSTON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

FOR THE YEAR 1828.

THE reports received by the Directors from the several schools in this city in connexion with this society, are highly interesting and encouraging. Two new schools have been established within the past year, making nine now in operation, connected with which are 1089 children, and 202 teachers. The management of these schools, and the different methods of instruction pursued in them, are under the direction of the superintendents and teachers particularly connected with them, and at the quarterly meetings of this Society an opportunity is afforded to make known improvements, and listen to suggestions tending to advance the general interests of the schools. Every teacher is called upon not only to devote himself to the moral and religious instruction of a class, but freely to give his opinion and experience respecting any plans he may think most conducive to the general good. By this means, mind acts on mind and produces improvement, and teachers are diligently seeking after, and carefully considering the plans of others, in order to adapt them to the situations and wants of their particular schools. We will give a brief abstract from these reports, commencing with the Sunday schools in the Rev. Dr Lowell's society, which were established in 1822.

The school for boys consists of 44 pupils, and 4 teachers. In this school there have been a few engaged as teachers, who were once pupils in it, evincing already some happy results from the labor bestowed. In addition to scriptural and oral instruction, various manuals and catechisms are used, and among the general exercises is the giving out a portion of scripture on one Sabbath to be read on the next, for the purpose of requiring the explanation of any words and passages they may be called to read, which is calculated to interest and excite inquiry, and to overcome the habit of reading without understanding.

"In the school for girls, there are 77 pupils, and 17 teachers. This school is entirely separated from the boys, and is under the direction of the ladies. Within the past year the reward system has been entirely discontinued, and no inconvenience has been experienced. The children have attended as punctually as before, and have appeared quite as much interested. There is in this school a library, formed in 1826, which has not only greatly interested the children, but the books loaned have been gladly received, and proved highly interesting to many of the parents. Singing has lately been introduced, and is found very pleasing to the children, and adds much to the interest of our exercises."

The Hancock Sunday school, according to the report, is in as flourishing a condition as at any former year. "The number attending the school has not diminished, being 130 on an average, out of 164 belonging to it. There are 27 teachers, 15 ladies, and 12 gentlemen, several of whom have been in the school from its

commencement in June, 1823. No material change has taken place in the exercises the past year, except the introduction occasionally of a general lesson on some subject in natural history, which has been highly interesting, and afforded an opportunity of strongly impressing the mind with the wisdom and goodness of Him, who is over all, in all, and through all. The intercourse of the teachers with their classes," adds this report, " is in some respects different from what it has been. There is less formality, and more frankness. The best feelings of the child are addressed, and every day occurrences treated upon familiarly. Thus the teacher in very many instances, is made the confidant of the children, who have exposed to him their weaknesses and faults, and with a softened heart have felt the want of a teacher's counsel, and the approbation of their own minds, and at an early age, even, to see the suitableness of what they are taught to meet those wants which they have been made to feel. We notice this more particularly, fearing that those who are not intimately acquainted with Sunday schools, have the impression, that there is acquired at them " a religion of the *head* only, and that the religion of the heart can only be drank in with the accents which fall from parental lips." While it is admitted that too much importance cannot be given to the agency of parents in communicating religious instruction, it is not necessary that such a contrast should be made, as would appear to some, to undervalue the agency of the Sunday school teacher."

The next in order is the Franklin Sunday School, recently removed from Franklin Street, to the vestry in Purchase Street. " There are belonging to this

school, 150 children and 25 teachers, and when the weather admits there are generally 135 children present. There is a library attached to the school containing 300 volumes, making an increase the last year of 100 volumes. The same mode of instruction," says this report, "is continued which was first adopted, viz. a plain, simple conversational mode, using no class book but the Bible, principally the New Testament with the younger classes. No lessons are required to be committed to memory, any further than the child can be encouraged to do it for its own pleasure, and to gratify its teacher. No rewards or punishments have been found requisite, and order is preserved by the disposition to do so, which appears to prevail to a great degree among the children. The system has therefore proved a good one for this school, and has equalled the expectations of the teachers. The plan of giving out a lesson to the whole school by the Superintendent, is continued. It generally embraces some subject of Natural History, or Natural Philosophy, through which the children can be led to have a deeper sense of the existence, the power, and goodness of God, by viewing him in his works. Among the children in this school, there are 24 from the Female Asylum. They were admitted at the request of the directors of that institution, in the hope that they might receive an advantage which they could not within the walls of the Asylum; and it is gratifying to us to learn, that in this they have not been disappointed. Among the many things to encourage us, there is none of greater influence, than that of seeing some of the most careless and indifferent of the children, and those among the oldest, who have become perfectly changed in their disposition and conduct

in every respect. They first came, though with reluctance, because their parents wished it; nothing interested them, they were troublesome and mischievous. They now come punctually and cheerfully, and appear to take an interest in all the exercises."

"The Howard School was established in December 1826, by a few ladies and gentlemen, part of whom were teachers in the Hancock and Franklin Schools. On account of the extreme difficulty of access and other circumstances, the attendance has never been large. The number of pupils belonging to this school is about 90—the average attendance 60; the number of teachers is 13—(7 ladies and 6 gentlemen) many of whom have been in the school from its first commencement. The school is under the direction of 2 superintendents, who conduct the exercises alternately, one of whom has a class of the elder children under his particular care. The method of imparting instruction is principally by familiar conversation with the children on the Bible, particularly the New Testament. The scriptures are the principal source whence we obtain the knowledge we require for the instruction of the children. Connected with the school is a library for the benefit of the children, presented by an individual, to whom we would express our warmest thanks, but who is unknown to us. It is but justice to the benevolent donor to say, that the introduction of this library was hailed with joy by the teachers, inasmuch as it has been a source to which they could always resort in their endeavors to form and give a proper direction to the minds of the children. Within a few weeks the school has been removed to the Friend Street chapel, erected for the use of the Rev. Dr Tuckerman. This being a very neat and convenient room,

our situation is rendered more comfortable and pleasant, and we have reason to believe our number will be increased." This report closes with adding, "that on looking back on the past year, we can truly say, that we believe our labor has not been in vain. A large number of the children are with us who came at the commencement of the school. Many of them are taken from parents who are unable to give them any religious instruction, and who from their situation are exposed to many corrupting influences. Their punctuality and general good behaviour, however, evince at least a deep interest, and we are led to believe that they are greatly profited by attending the school. We would feel thankful that we have been called to labor in this good work, and would bear on our minds, the high and responsible station in which we are placed, and that we are laboring in the cause of him who came to seek and save, and who has said, that we should 'not be weary in well doing, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not.'"

"The Sunday School in the 12th Congregational Society, was commenced in March, 1827. It is a parish school. The number of scholars at present belonging is 117—the number of teachers 25. The pastor of the society stands in the relation of superintendent to the school; he has two assistants, who in his absence have alternately charge of the school. The books which are used for instruction, are Carpenter's, the Worcester, and first part of the Geneva Catechism, Abstract of Bible History, Mc Dowell's Questions, and the Bible. The following is the method of instruction. The school is opened with singing and prayer. Short lessons are then recited to the teachers from the manuals of the class, and familiarly

and practically explained. After which, in each class, some chapter is selected from the Bible, read audibly by the children, explained and commented on by the teacher, or questions asked in relation to it, and answered by the children in turn. For the latter purpose, printed or written questions are used, which being accompanied with references to the chapter only, and given out on cards the previous week, lead to an attentive and understanding perusal of the scriptures, and enable the children to give intelligible and satisfactory answers on the succeeding sabbath. An experiment of a lecture on a subject in Natural History, was introduced by one of the assistants, which seemed to fix and reward the attention of the children. The Juvenile Library of this school, which contains between 2 and 300 volumes, continues to be a source of undiminished attraction, and we hope of no small improvement to the children ; all of whom are permitted to avail themselves of its privileges every sabbath in the year. The only things, perhaps, that are wanting to increase the usefulness of this school," adds this report, "is a larger supply of juvenile books, and of a still better character ; the introduction occasionally of some general exercise, and a continuance of the same zeal and interest which now pervade its teachers and pupils."

"The Hollis Street school was established in the spring of 1827. The number of scholars belonging to the school is 150, for which there are 33 teachers—23 ladies, and 10 gentlemen. Children are received from all parts of the city, and from every religious denomination. The government of the school consists of four superintendents who preside every sabbath in rotation.

Each has his own peculiar mode. The school is opened by a short address to the children by one of the superintendents. This address is given by two of them in an affectionate exhortation, or lecture on some moral or religious duty. The other two for a few months past, have given a connected series of lectures on the works of God or natural religion familiarly illustrated, which soon win and fix the attention even of the smallest children. The scriptures are explained, and familiar conversations with the pupils on moral and religious subjects make up the regular services. There is a library in the school, the books of which are loaned to the children on every sabbath. The school is at present in a flourishing condition, and though a new school has been established in the vicinity within the past year, our number continues as large as ever, and the punctuality and interest manifested by the TEACHERS and pupils, is peculiarly gratifying and encouraging to us."

"The Chauncy school was established in January last, in the Berry Street vestry, by a few gentlemen and ladies who were engaged in the Franklin School, that school having become so large that more could not be accommodated. During the spring and summer, the school increased slowly, but on our late removal to the vestry in Chauncy place, it increased to over 100, and the general attendance is about 80. The plan of instruction was taken from the Franklin school, but in our practice we have made some trifling alterations—none however that change the original plan. No other book is used as a manual but the Bible. The superintendence of the school is divided between four gentlemen, who have classes and perform their duties each sabbath in turn, by

which arrangement we think the interest is greater to the children. We have a library of juvenile books attached to the school, which are eagerly sought after by the children, and we are induced to think, effect great good. The children composing this school are generally of good families, and but a few of that class which Sunday schools seemed first designed to benefit. But we think," adds this report, "that our labors are not in vain, and that Sunday schools which shall embrace children of this class, will prove highly beneficial. Meetings of the teachers are held once in two weeks for the purpose of conversing on subjects relating to the school, to interchange opinions, and animate each other in our labors."

"The Sunday School in the South Congregational Society has been established about 6 months. It contains at present about 100 children, and 27 teachers, the majority of whom are from the Rev. Mr Motte's society. The New Testament is used for the most part in the instruction of the classes, which is read with a commentary by the elder scholars. The younger children are instructed by familiar conversation, suggested and occasionally relieved by reading juvenile books of the simplest character that we can obtain in union with religious truth. The deficiency of our library, which comprises about 200 volumes, is here much felt; almost all the books being too ambitious in their style, expressions, and sentiment, to be useful to the smaller children. The teachers have regular meetings, which are made highly interesting and useful by the lectures of the Rev. Mr Motte, on subjects directly or collaterally relating to the duties of the school."

We are informed that the parish school in the Brattle Street society is attended with great pleasure by the

children, and their punctuality, and the interest they evidently take in it, are highly gratifying to the teachers and friends of the school. While it continues to receive its present valuable aid and assistance, and while the same interest is manifested in its welfare, it cannot fail to be a source of great happiness to all connected with it.

Such are the extracts we have made from these reports, and we regret that we are unable to add more of their contents. They present a most gratifying and encouraging prospect, and we would desire to acknowledge with gratitude, the goodness of that Being who has thus far helped us, and without whose divine assistance all our labors are vain. We have nine Sunday Schools in this city, in each of which, whatever difference there may be in the methods of instruction, we unite in an anxious desire to discover and adopt that which is best adapted to our object, and that object is, to render religious instruction interesting and attractive to children. We think it by no means impossible to do this, provided they are addressed in language which they can comprehend, and their sensibility to moral beauty awakened by pointing out the wonders of the world around them, and leading their minds by natural objects, as well as by revelation, to the beneficent Father of all, who has created so many sources of comfort and delight, and to whom we owe the warmest gratitude, and the most faithful obedience. To teach them to go to religion, not as to a gloomy subject, wrapt in mysterious language, rendering it an irksome and fatiguing duty, but as the most interesting of all occupations. We would not merely charge the memory with religious truths,—we would have them

love and *reverence* those truths,—refer to them in their little trials and temptations, and realize their power by experience. These are the important objects, which this Society has in view. To accomplish this, it desires not so much to compute in numbers, as to discover the best means to accomplish this great end. It calls on men freely to think, to devise, to act, and to suggest improvements in this good work: to consider objections, and see if that which was commenced and adapted to one particular place, may not, modified and amended, be beneficial in another. Its prime object is improvement. It binds none together, but in the bonds of christian love, urging each other to do what they can to advance a knowledge of the Word of Life. It calls on them to reflect, and to act independently, to apply their instruction to the peculiar wants of its recipients, and to make known their plans for the benefit of others.

In looking over these reports, we find, therefore, with pleasure, that these are the guiding principles of each individual. In one school, we hear of a "frankness and friendship" which brings the teacher and pupil together in strong affection, so that they compare their motives for action with the high standard of the gospel, and thus stimulate each other to love and good works. "How delightful, how interesting," says one report, "to see a little child confessing its faults to its teacher, that it may receive the advice of that true friend, and the happiness of an approving conscience." Well might we ask, who can estimate the influence here exerted? In another report, we hear of talents employed in exciting the curiosity of childhood, to discover the goodness and power of God in his works, and thus lead them to real-

ize his care and love for them, and draw them to a nearer view of his glorious perfections. One says, " we aim in all our instructions to be direct and practical, and address ourselves much to the affections, feeling, that in childhood especially, out of the heart are the issues of life ;" and another says, "our object is to awaken and call forth the mind to action, and give it such impressions of virtue and holiness, as shall advance its progress to attain it ; we think," this writer adds, " that the course to obtain this, is to lead the minds of the young to think for themselves, rather than overburthen them with the thoughts of others, which they may not have understood, and thus our labor be lost."

And what are the effects of all these various plans ? What is the effect of thus applying religious instruction to the particular wants of the young ? Are they not apparent, when we hear from these reports of the improved habits of children, of their increased love of truth and obedience, of their happiness with their teachers, of the pleasure with which they attend the Sunday School,— and of the joy with which they welcome him to their homes ? They listen, say these reports, not only attentively to the general exercises of the superintendent, but with pleasure repeat on the ensuing sabbath the knowledge he had previously imparted to them. These are its effects, and who will ask for better ?

We must listen however to one complaint in some of these reports ; it is the want of teachers. We can indeed find many to engage, but we want those who are interested—interested in our holy religion—in the piety and religious welfare of the young. We call on those persons who say they would do what they can to aid in

this good work, to visit a Sunday School—to see the happiness which is enjoyed there—to *consider* the good which will result to themselves by engaging in them, and far more, the great use they may be to others. We make this appeal earnestly, and hope it will not be unheeded. In the mean time, teacher,—you who amid your many duties are sometimes disheartened—you who see so much to do, and can accomplish but part—you who ask in vain for aid; Go on—fear not; as the oil in the widow's cruise failed not, so your strength shall be. Trust in God,—trust in the good cause you have in hand—*perseverance* is the duty of a Christian, and *hope* his privilege. Persevere therefore "even unto death, and thy reward shall be a crown of life."

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

TO THE

BOSTON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

FOR THE YEAR 1828.

When this society was instituted, there were three objects which it had principally in view. The first, that of bringing the members together at stated intervals, for the purpose of consulting each other on the subjects which relate particularly to the interests of the Sunday schools in our city, the teachers of which, in a great measure, compose the society.

The second, to endeavor to effect an interchange of communication between the schools in this city and those in other parts of the country, in order to learn whether there were not some points, in which a co-operation of the efforts of both might result in the general good of the whole.

The third object, was that of publishing, as soon as the means of the society should enable them to do so, a series of such books as are wanted for juvenile libraries, and particularly for those of our Sunday schools.

The quarterly meetings of the society, have been happily productive of the *first* object.

The degree of success which has attended our exertions for obtaining the *second*, will be seen in the course of this report.

With regard to the *third*, the Directors of this Society received, in October last, a proposal from the Executive

Committee of the American Unitarian Association, to unite with them in the publication of children's books. This proposal has been accepted, a publishing committee appointed, and the work is now just begun. But little can be done at first, for there are many obstacles to oppose ; but there is reason to hope for great ultimate success, from the prosecution of this plan.

It will be recollected, that at the time of the last annual public meeting of this society, it had then been in operation but a few months ; and although all suitable measures had been taken to make known its existence and its objects, yet there was but little to communicate with regard to its effects, except what related to the influence it had on the schools in our city. The intelligence we had then received from the neighboring towns, was from three or four sources only. We were well aware, however, that many causes had operated to prevent the formation of Sunday schools in Unitarian parishes ; that many circumstances concurred to defeat the efforts which were made in those that had been commenced, and to prevent the successful operation of many of them so completely as to cause them to be abandoned for a time. And we knew that nothing had operated so much to produce these results, as the imperfect or unfortunate system of instruction and management which had been adopted—a system which was introduced with the formation of the first Sunday schools which were established in our country, one which has been looked upon with distrust by many of the most sincere friends of moral and religious instruction, and which has been viewed with indifference by many others.

But the state of these schools has been gradually im-

proving, and within the last three years, a very great change has been effected in them, in regard to the principles of management and the modes of instruction. Since the establishment of this society, and particularly since the time of its last public annual meeting, the subject of *Sunday school influence* has been brought more fully to notice, and much more has been said and written to awaken attention to these institutions, than had been previously, in any equal period of time. Much more has since been *done* also, to increase the number, and improve the character of our Sunday schools. It is clearly seen, that parents are more fully convinced of their importance. Teachers are becoming more and more interested in the duty of instruction, from the conviction that their former labors have not been performed in vain. And from inquiry it will be found, that *children* view them as the happy means of their spending a great part of the Sunday in a manner which is both pleasant and instructive.

It is evident that these effects have been produced, not merely in our city and its immediate vicinity, but at a distance from us, and in many parts of our country.

To the inquiries which have been made by this society, through the medium of a circular sent to all the Unitarian parishes of which we have any knowledge, very gratifying answers have been returned.

Communications have been received from thirty towns, viz.:—*Springfield, Andover N. Parish, Northboro', Hardwick, Northampton, Chelmsford, Waltham, Concord, Newburyport, Amesbury, East Cambridge, Roxbury, Kingston, Sterling, Cambridge, Cambridgeport, Brewster, Brighton, Hingham, Dennis, New Bedford,*

Charlestown. Dublin, N. H. Brooklyn, Conn. Portland and Belfast, Me. Baltimore, Md. Portsmouth, N. H. Providence, R. I.

It will not come within the object of this report, to give particular accounts of these schools, although, with a single exception, they are very favorable, and most of them highly interesting and encouraging. We can only make such a statement of the principal facts and circumstances in relation to them, as will give a general view of the whole.

The number of children in each school varies from 20 to 260, about two-fifths of them boys. The aggregate number is 2667. The number of teachers, in all of them, is 438. In 26 of these schools, there are juvenile libraries. In only eight of these communications, are the number of books mentioned; but these eight give a number of 2124 volumes, which will give between six and seven thousand volumes for the whole number of schools, if their libraries are supplied only in proportion to those mentioned.

In the exercises of these schools, we find that the Bible, or the New Testament principally, is used as a class book for all the children who are old enough to understand it by the aid of explanations from their teachers. Various catechisms are used in most of them; yet in some of the schools, the Bible is the only book admitted to aid in giving direct scriptural instruction. In some, many manuals and catechisms are employed as class books; in others, but few—this being regulated without any other restraint than the feelings and necessities of those who are engaged as instructers. There appears also, to be a considerable difference with regard to the

minor regulations of the different schools; each adopting such rules of discipline and government as may be deemed by each, most conducive to the end in view. *All* are ready to communicate, and all seeking such information as may contribute to the good of the whole.

The length of time these schools have been established, is a circumstance, which, though at first view apparently of little consequence, yet when viewed in relation to the time that this society commenced its operations, it becomes one of much interest; for we find that all except five of them, have been commenced within the last three years; and two-thirds of the whole number, since the time this society was organized. And this, we cannot but feel is a strong indication that its voice has been heard, its calls have been listened to, and its examples followed.

The distance from which reports of these several schools have come to us, show that there is a wide-spread and lively sympathy existing in relation to the subject of Sunday school instruction. The whole tenor and spirit of the communications which have reached us, evince a strong desire, in all who are engaged in this work, to extend the operations and the usefulness of a system which promises so much good to the rising generation; and a willingness to co-operate in all reasonable measures for the promotion of this object.

It will not be possible for me, at this time, to report but a small proportion of the encouraging information which has been received from correspondents; yet I cannot discharge my duty to the members of this society, without exhibiting to them, as far as the time will allow, the evidences we possess that their efforts are favorably

appreciated at a distance, far beyond the sphere of their immediate operations, and that many are engaged in advancing the cause for which this society is laboring.

Nor can I so faithfully do justice to those who have favored us with communications, as by presenting such portions of them as the objects of this meeting demand, in the language in which they were received.

And first, with regard to the importance of Sunday schools, and their effects on the children who attend them.

By the Rev. Mr Allen, of Northboro', it is stated,—"There has been a Sunday school in this place for five years, and I am more and more convinced every year, of the propitious influence of these schools, both upon those who teach, and those who are taught."

The Rev. Mr Peabody, of Springfield, in relation to this subject, observes,—"I have always till lately, taken a part in the instruction of the school, but I now have a class which I am preparing for teachers, who meet in a separate apartment. I find my care in the school, by far the most encouraging and delightful part of my duty. The children generally seem to take much interest in the exercise, and regret when it is ended; and there is a sensible change for the better, in the behaviour of the children in church, through the whole service of the day."

The Rev. Mr Osgood, of Sterling, says,—"The advantages which have resulted from our Sunday school, are, that many more children have attended church, and those who stay at noon, are receiving religious instruction; when before, they were left to themselves, free from the restraints of their parents, and exposed to tempta-

tions. And we have reason to believe that the Sabbath is better observed at home, and to hope that many good impressions have been made on the minds of the children by their teachers."

The members of this society know full well how to appreciate the advantages which have resulted to them from devoting a portion of their time to prepare for meeting their classes on the Sabbath. They know, also, that without such preparation, but little good can be effected in the schools; and they will therefore, no doubt, be gratified to learn that this subject has not been overlooked by the teachers of those schools from which we have received reports.

From our correspondent in Cambridgeport, Mr Hunt, the superintendent of the school, we have the following remarks. "It is inquired in the circular, what will most increase the usefulness of the school? We answer, that which would most improve, and best qualify the instructers. It is a mistake to suppose that good feelings and good principles, unattended with knowledge, are sufficient; for, much as we may value the zeal and piety of an instructer, if he would be a successful teacher in a Sunday school, and would heighten the character, and increase the usefulness of his instructions, he must seek for information, and strive for capability."

"In connexion with this subject, it may be mentioned, that nothing would be of greater benefit than the establishment of a library for teachers in every Sunday school."

Mr Hunt adds, "It would increase the interest of teachers, and operate as an encouragement to them, if the parents and friends of the youth in these schools would more generally visit them, and show a readiness to

co-operate with them in the labors of instruction. If knowledge and virtue are valuable, where could a teacher look with more propriety, or with stronger claims for counsel, encouragement, and sympathy, than to the parents who wish their children to be in every way prepared to obtain these blessings. When it is considered, that a faithful and interested teacher would be amply rewarded for years of instruction to save a child from a single act which would stain his future character, or materially diminish his future happiness, it cannot be thought too much to call the attention of all parents to a subject which will most solemnly and deeply affect the future *character*, *happiness*, and *virtue*, of society."

The influence of teachers' meetings is a subject which is noticed in several of the reports, and in a manner which shows that they are esteemed highly important, not only in regard to the teachers themselves, but to the children.

A single extract from the report of the school in Concord, will be sufficient for our purpose. In this, it is stated, "that the teachers hold frequent meetings, in which whatever is connected with the usefulness and improvement of the school is made the subject of familiar discussion. Each one makes any inquiry he may choose, and the greatest freedom prevails in communicating information. Such business as requires the formality of a vote, is conducted and recorded by the secretary; but it is desired to proceed with as little ceremony as is consistent with the good of the cause. These meetings are found to have a very beneficial influence. The teachers become acquainted with each other's views; they enter more ardently and effectually on their duties, and the school is conducted in a more enlightened and useful manner."

It appears, by the reports we have received, that the libraries for children are esteemed a most valuable auxiliary for the advancement of the schools; but the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient number of suitable books, and such as are suitable, at a reasonable rate, is a matter of general complaint. The following brief extracts will furnish a clear statement of the opinions which are entertained by correspondents on this subject; and also gratifying testimony of the feelings of approbation with which the operations and designs of this society are contemplated.

Mr Shattuck, the superintendent of the school in Concord, writes,—"I rejoice that your society is about to commence the publication of books suitable for Sunday school libraries. These are much wanted. It is now difficult to obtain them, because there are few free from objections, and these are held at high prices. Be assured you will have the hearty approbation and support of the friends of Sunday schools in this society; and that we shall be pleased to preserve a correspondence, for your exertions are highly prized by our teachers."

The Rev. Mr Whitman, of Waltham, states,—"We shall have, probably, fifty dollars annually, to be expended in juvenile books; and we are very desirous you should proceed with your plan for furnishing those of the right kind, at a reasonable rate." He afterwards adds, "We are deeply engaged in the cause of Sunday schools, and we are grateful for your sympathy. We hope you will be able to increase our gratitude, by furnishing such publications as we need. We reciprocate all interest and congratulations, and firmly trust mutual benefit may arise from further communications."

NOTICE.

It is the design of the Boston Sunday School Society, in connexion with the American Unitarian Association, to furnish a series of books suitable for juvenile readers. They propose to issue as many original works as they can procure of an approved character, and also to republish such others as shall seem to them to possess superior excellence. The extent of their plan is such, that they hope to be able to supply Sunday Schools and Juvenile Libraries with all that can be essentially useful to children and youth, of every age and capacity. Catechisms, manuals, and other books designed for the aid of parents and teachers, will come within the list of those which they intend to publish. It will be their aim to furnish the books at as low a rate as they can, without pecuniary loss; and as fast as the means they possess, and the encouragement given them, will permit. Manuscripts left with the agents, Messrs. Wait, Greene, & Co., and Bowles & Dearborn, having the prices marked on them, and directed to the Publishing Committee of the Boston Sunday School Society, will receive prompt attention. Such as shall be deemed suited to their purpose, they will wish to purchase; and those which shall not, will be returned in the manner the authors may suggest.

18mo. Series.—Vol. I.

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Boston, January, 1829.

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THE

ANNUAL REPORTS

OF THE

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BOSTON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

FOR THE YEAR 1831.

BOSTON:

GRAY & BOWEN, GENERAL AGENTS.

1831.

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BOSTON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The fourth annual public meeting of this society took place on the evening of December 29th at the church in Federal Street. The house was filled with a large and very attentive audience. After prayer by Rev. Mr Young, a Report on the present state of the Sunday Schools in this city was read by Mr Charles Bowen, stating their condition, &c. A Report was also read by Dr Flagg, Corresponding Secretary of the Society, giving the number, state, and discipline of the various Sunday Schools in neighboring towns.

The meeting was then addressed by Mr F. T. Gray, pointing out an advantage, by which these institutions were multiplied in remote places, by the removing thither of those who had formerly been teachers in our schools. He illustrated his remarks by incidents he had known in journeying through the Western country.

Rev. Mr Parkman then made some remarks. He thought the Reports afforded matter of congratulation, embracing reports of two schools in different states of the Union. He thought however, that the chief danger to which they were exposed was from their very popularity and success. They had not been perverted to sectarian purposes. He approved the Report, that had been read, which had been free from gratulatory boasting, stating fairly and simply the success obtained and the difficulties encountered. He concluded by commenting upon a reason offered by young men, why they did not take part in the Sunday School teaching, founded on the simplicity of the instruction given.

Rev. Mr Pierpont next spoke on the want of male teachers. He said he spoke not in reproach, but rather in sorrow. It was an evil that fell back upon themselves. It is better to instruct than to receive instruction; nay, it is the same thing. It is receiving instruction in the only legitimate way—in the exercise of their own faculties. They say, he observed, the improvement is so slow that they are discouraged. All good works go on slowly. Christianity advanced slowly. The Apostles themselves were slow in learning the nature and object of their religion. He replied to the objection, that children understood so few things, and with so much difficulty, after explaining and re-explaining, that it was necessary to go so often over the same ground, that it is one of the incidents of all teaching. He took occasion to pay a high and just compliment to the female teachers for their faithful and effectual labors. With regard to the young men, he thought if he might mention a temporal inducement, that it was for their advantage to bind to them the hearts of those just coming after them in life. Another advantage to teachers is that they who teach morals will be more guarded in their own; and that young men need all, to preserve them against temptation. He offered a beautiful illustration of this remark. He concluded by suggesting the propriety of teaching other than *strictly* religious lessons.—Natural history, he thought, might be profitably blended in these exercises, in which the wisdom and goodness of God might be brought forcibly before the children, and love to Him, which is the foundation of all other virtues, be thus inspired.

Mr F. O. Watts complained of a want of sympathy with the teachers. They were not cheered in their duties or tasks, by whichever name it be called, by that sympathy which causes a work to advance with activity and zeal. People are more ready to talk than to act; to admire beautiful results, than to apply them-

selves to the details by which they are accomplished. He thought it necessary that the teachers should not be merely teachers, but that they should be enlightened.

Mr Pierpont again rose to state the fact that at the Unitarian Sunday Schools at Cincinnati, children of Swedenborgians and of Universalists attend; a happy testimony to the fact already stated, that Unitarian were not sectarian schools, but that the children were only taught those great simple moral rules and precepts, in which all denominations agree.

Rev. Mr Ripley did not find young men deficient, but sees no reason for discouragement if they do not find the sympathy they desire. He thinks pure religion is oftenest corrupted by a pre-occupation of the mind, and the business of instruction is to *unlearn*. Great exertions are being made to repress Christianity in *every* form. These exertions are not to be met by persecution or menace, but by reason. Hence a strong motive to engage in the teaching of the Sunday schools, that the seeds of morality and religion may be early sowed.

Prof. Ware, jr. agreed with a preceding speaker that the language of exultation was not proper on these occasions. Nevertheless, this being his first attendance upon this occasion here, his should be only the language of congratulation.—He was pleased to see that there was no attempt at parade and show. In the cathedral of London he had seen 8000 children dressed up and shown off for 6 long hours. They were obliged to hear a long sermon, with all the forms of their church, and to sing two or three of Hyadn's nard anthems. He rejoiced that no such thing was attempted here. The world is now awake on the subject of education. *We* begin with spiritual education, fitting children for every situation; for the duties of home, and of the house of God, for the active duties of life, for death, and judgment. To the next generation the beneficial results will be unspeakable.

Rev. Mr Gannett did not intend to have addressed the meeting, but the example of the gentleman who last spoke—who in a delicate state of health had come in from a neighboring town, braving the danger of illness, from which however the community would suffer yet more than himself—put to shame those that held back. He thought that aymen should come forward on these occasions, and not leave the addresses to be made so generally by clergymen. He feared the remarks of the gentleman who proposed the introduction of natural history among the Sunday School teachings might be taken in too great an extent—to the exclusion of religious teaching.—The instruction at church is too high and too abstract to be understood by these little children. It flies over their heads, and is caught by their parents and elders. He thinks that enough may be found in the history of Jesus to occupy them day after day and year after year, without walking in too narrow a circle, and returning too often to the same point.

Rev. Mr Tuckerman then made a few remarks upon the excellent influences of Sunday Schools upon the children of the poorest part of the community—whose mothers have bad husbands, who cannot go to church but are left at home alone with their children. The influence of these schools in saving them from crime is great. He exhorted the teachers to seek out such children, and to visit their parents.

The President of the Society, Hon. J. Phillips, being absent, the Vice President, the Rev. Mr Tuckerman, presided. The addresses, of which the above is necessarily a very imperfect sketch, were exceedingly interesting ; and at no time since the formation of the society has there been manifested so great an interest on the occasion.

REPORT

OF THE

DIRECTORS OF THE BOSTON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

ON THE STATE OF THE SCHOOL IN THE CITY OF BOSTON,

FOR THE YEAR, 1831.

The meeting of the members and friends of the Boston Sunday School Society convened at this time, affords to the directors an opportunity, and indeed imposes upon them the duty, of communicating such information as they have been able to gather of the progress, situation, and prospects of the Sunday Schools connected with the Society in this city. It is now but eight years since the establishment of the first of the eleven institutions from whom we now have returns. At that time many among us doubted of their expediency; they had witnessed the manner in which some schools had been conducted, and they feared that no adequate good could result from them. A few, however, entertained different views; they believed that some institution for teaching children the first rudiments of religion was urgently needed, some place where the first ideas of God and revelation might be communicated and fostered. They considered them as the Primary Schools of religion, where the minds of children could be taught to understand the nature and attributes of God, the character and teachings of our Saviour, and the truths and evidences of revelation; and thus

prepare them for receiving and understanding the higher instruction communicated in the church. They did not believe, that any good could result from crowding the youthful memory with detached passages of scripture, without affording any clue for understanding them, but they were convinced, that some knowledge of the pure and simple religion of Jesus, might be communicated to children, without exciting fatigue and disgust for labors and mysteries beyond their comprehension.

On such principles and views, the Hancock Sunday School was established, and its founders can now look with honest exultation on eleven similar institutions within the bounds of this city, and a large number scattered throughout the country as the fruits of their labors. The condition of the schools in Boston, as respects the number of teachers and pupils, has varied but little since our last annual meeting, but in their management and internal condition, it is believed some progress has been made. The most interesting information, however, respecting their situation can be gained from the reports of the directors of the different schools, of which we will proceed to offer a brief abstract. .

From the report of the Hancock Sunday School, we perceive, that it contains at present ten male and eleven female teachers, and one hundred and seventeen pupils. Manuals, are extensively and it is believed advantageously used, particularly in the morning. ' In the afternoon the teachers explain to their scholars the books taken from the library on the preceding Sabbath, and question them respecting their contents.' The general exercises, usually consist of a precept selected from the New Testament and practically illustrated ; recently, however, this course has been varied by introducing familiar lectures on natural history. Teachers meetings are frequently held, and lately, a course of lectures was commenced by different teachers, on sub-

jects connected with the duties of Sunday School teachers.

'Never, (says the report) at any period since its commencement, has there existed such an interest in the school as at present, both on the part of the teachers and pupils. This fact is proved by the punctuality of their attendance, and by the pleasure which all its exercises appear to afford. At no time has the school been in so flourishing a condition, and we have reason to hope and trust that by the blessing of God, without which we can do nothing, much good will result from our labors.'

From the Purchase street, (late Franklin) School, a full and very interesting return has been received, and it is to be regretted that our limits, will not admit of transfering as much of its matter to this report as we could wish.

The number of pupils connected with the school is over one hundred, of which the largest proportion are girls. The number of teachers is 18—11 female, and 7 male. The situation of the school has not essentially varied since the last report, and it still continues in a flourishing condition. The prayer composed by Dr Follen is used in opening the school, and its simplicity, devotional spirit, and peculiar fitness are spoken of in very high terms. The system pursued continues to consist almost entirely of oral instruction, which is considered the most effectual and useful mode. The following remarks by a female teacher, as given in the report, will show in some degree the course adopted.

'With regard to books used for instruction, I have as little to do with them as possible, imparting instruction as much as I am able by conversation; using the books myself in order to obtain the necessary information, but seldom refering to them in presence of my class.'

In answer to the question, of what appears to be most wanting to increase the usefulness or improve the condition of the schools? It is stated, '*undeviating*

punctuality on the part of teachers,' is considered as of the first and greatest importance, and the want of it as almost the greatest obstacle there can be to the usefulness of Sunday Schools. Teachers meetings and the co-operation and assistance of pastors, are also considered as very valuable and important auxiliaries.

From the report of the Superintendent of the Howard School, it appears that there are now about 65 children and 9 teachers, 5 gentlemen and 4 ladies, connected with this school. From this it seems that some diminution has been experienced since the last report, both in the number of pupils and teachers. This decrease, however, may be attributed to various causes, viz : its *location*, which though good for collecting the children for whose benefit this school was particularly designed, is still disagreeable and inconvenient, for teachers, especially for ladies in the winter season when the passage to it is at times almost impassable. The report also mentions the resignation of its former superintendent as a severe loss. These causes and some others not necessary to enumerate, have thinned the ranks of the teachers, and as an inevitable consequence caused a falling off in the attendance of the pupils. 'But a recollection of what the school has once been, and a conviction that it might still be resussitated, has roused its friends to extra exertions, and they now have a hope that the field of usefulness is again opening to them with brighter prospects.'

The school connected with the Twelfth Congregational Society, is represented in their report as in a highly prosperous condition, and rapidly increasing in extent and usefulness. It numbers at the present time 165 pupils and 30 teachers,—12 of the latter are males, and 18 females. Exclusive of these, however, there are *three* individuals who act as superintendants, and one as librarian. The library contains about 350 volumes.

'The method and course of instruction in this school has not been essentially varied from that described in previous reports;' the use of manuals is dispensed with as far as possible, and oral instruction substituted in their stead. 'Lectures on Natural Philosophy continue to be given at intervals as heretofore.' Teachers meetings are held monthly, and to these are attributed the interests and fidelity which has been manifested by the teachers.'

The increased attendance and improved deportment of the pupils, and the fact that many children are sent to this school by members of other denominations of christians, are cited as encouraging evidence, that their labors have not been without their reward.

The Chauncy Sunday School contains about 140 pupils, and 21 teachers. 'In regard to our school, (says the report) we would remark, that its situation is much the same as stated in our last year's return. There is a general interest among the teachers and children, which would remove all doubts that progress is not made in cultivating those principles which religion urges upon us.' With respect to the library, the report says, 'we feel that *this* department is liable to *great* abuse, by introducing books without a proper discrimination of their *tendency*. More evil may be done by a few books carelessly written, than can be corrected by many hours of faithful teaching.' The want of a sufficient number of male teachers, is severely felt in this school; and not being connected with any particular parish, it is a want which it has not the facilities of some other schools in supplying. The necessity of the sympathy and co-operation of parents, is exhibited in the following extract from this return.

'We feel that Sunday Schools are not duly appreciated and understood by the community. We have not yet obtained the sympathy and interest of parents, and until they shall feel more the importance of this interest, our schools do not have their full effect; we feel

that the meetings of your society, are to do much in awakening the interests of parents to the importance of Sunday Schools.'

From the Hollis Street School, no regular return has been received. At the time of our last aunual report this school had been discontinued for the winter. In the spring, however, it was reopened and continued in operation till within a few weeks, when it was again closed for the season. During the time it was open the number of pupils attending it was about 100, and over 20 teachers. A variety of circumstances have been stated as reasons for discontinuing this school during the winter; the principal of which is, the want of a sufficient number of male teachers who would attend *punctually*. It is hoped, however, that it will be again opened in the spring, under more auspicious circumstances.

The school of the South Congregational Society, is confidently stated to be in a more prosperous condition than at any other period since its organization. Soon after the report of the last year, from a want of punctuality in the male teachers and some other circumstances, the school was found to be in a declining condition. A meeting was called of forty or fifty individuals in the society, who it was thought might become interested, and the wants of the school explained, and its usefulness described; the result was, an immediate and important accession to the number of teachers and pupils, and a greater degree of punctuality and interest in those already engaged.

The number of pupils at present attached to the school is 140, with 30 teachers, 11 males and 19 female. The library contains nearly 400 volumes; but in the management of this department considerable difficulty has been experienced. More than 100 volumes have been lost, or retained by children who have left the school, and with all the exertions they have as yet been able to use, it has been found impossible entirely to check this evil.

The course of instruction pursued is essentially the same as heretofore. Oral instruction and the use of manuals is combined. The series of questions on sacred history prepared by Rev Mr Palfrey, have lately been introduced in all the classes except the youngest, and it is thought with much advantage. A want of *exact punctuality* in the teachers is still the greatest difficulty they have to contend with.

The new North School continues in successful operation, and as it appears from the report consists of about 100 pupils and 15 teachers. In this school, as in nearly all the others the use of manuals is combined with instruction by conversation, and general exercises or lectures by the superintendents. The general concerns of the school are managed by two superintendants, who are assisted quite frequently in their duties by their pastor, the Rev Mr Parkman. An examination of the children on some subject in the New Testament given out on the preceding Sabbath is found to be a useful, and interesting addition to the other exercises. The want of a regular series of books adapted to children of different ages, and to assist teachers in conveying instruction systematically, is much felt in this school, as is also the want of a sufficient number of male teachers.

The Brattle Street School, consists at the present time of 125 pupils and 21 teachers. The course of instruction pursued, is the same as in previous years, being a systematic use of various manuals as laid down by the Rev Mr Palfrey, their pastor. 'The attendance of the children, (says the report,) has been remarkably good, the teachers are much interested in their work, and the present condition of the school is such as to give great satisfaction to those engaged in it.'

The Federal Street Parish Sunday School, was commenced about a week previous to our last annual meeting, with 63 children and 9 teachers; it has increased, however, till it now numbers 100 pupils and

15 teachers. The superintendent, and several of the teachers, are the same who were formerly engaged in the Franklin Sunday School, and the same plan is pursued in this as was adopted in that, in regard to the exercises and mode of instruction. 'We have every reason, (says the report,) to consider the school as well established and in an improving condition. Instruction has been given to the whole school in lectures of fifteen or twenty minutes duration on some subject suitable to the occasion, by the junior pastor and the superintendent alternately, and we believe with good effect.'

In this school as in many others, great difficulties were at first experienced in the management of the library. A system has been arranged and carried into operation, however, which it is stated removes all difficulties and gives general satisfaction.

The importance of this subject to the welfare of all Sunday Schools will be a sufficient excuse, for extracting the whole account of this system.

1st. 'The books are all covered with strong paper, numbered and printed labels pasted on each, containing an address of caution to the children and their parents with regard to the use and abuse of the books.

They are under the care of an *adult* librarian, a lady, who has the whole control of the department, and who is one of the reading committee for selecting the books to be admitted.

An alphabetical catalogue is made out in a book the leaves of which are cut and lettered on the edge like a clerk's alphabetical index. The number of each book is placed against its title.

2d. *The distribution of the books to the classes.* The catalogue, and a book with ruled pages, which have the names of all the teachers written in a column on the left, are given to the first teacher. His class choose their books, and as each is selected, the number which stands against its title in the catalogue is

written with a pencil on the line against the teacher's name in the other books.

The next teacher does the same, observing, as he selects the books, what numbers have been already engaged by preceding classes.

The librarian then takes the books from the case and carries them to each teacher for his class. And in this way as many classes are supplied, as can be with convenience while the school is in operation; and other classes are supplied on succeeding Sundays.

When the books are returned, the librarian goes to the class to receive them, and the numbers are crossed which stand against the teacher's name as each book is given in.

In this way all is performed quietly and without any confusion, for neither the teachers or children leave their seats, nor do either go to the book case except by especial permission of the librarian; and if a book is missing, the librarian knows by the check book who to call upon for it.'

From the Sunday School connected with the Christian Society, a report has also been received, from which it appears that its average number of pupils was 100, with 16 teachers. A short time since, however, it was discontinued for the winter. From the preparations already made, and the plan proposed to be pursued, it is confidently believed that the school will reopen in the spring, with renewed animation and usefulness.

From these abstracts, it appears that there are eleven Sunday Schools in this city associated with this Society, and that these 11 schools contain 1332 pupils, and 234 teachers. Each of these schools possess a juvenile library, containing from one to four hundred volumes, so that the number of books belonging to all, may be fairly estimated at 3000 volumes.

From the facts thus given, it is evident that the situation of these institutions is as flourishing and useful as

at any former period. Though no important increase is observed in the number of their pupils and teachers, still we can see so much evidence of their stability and extended usefulness, as inspires us with gratitude to God, for the success of the efforts which have been made to establish them on a permanent foundation, and extend their sphere of benefits.

The most prominent difficulty which appears to impede their progress in the race of improvement, is a want of male teachers. Strange as it may appear, in a community abounding with pious, intelligent and capable young men, this is a want which has already endangered the very existence of several schools, and is a serious obstacle to the successful operation of nearly all. Many are found, who commence in the good work with zeal and ardor, but not being able to discover at once any very obvious advantages from their labors, they become fatigued and uninterested, and finally either quit the field altogether, or continue in such a listless and uncertain way, as but little advantage is derived from their efforts. It is needless to say here, how small a sacrifice of time and attention is required to make an active Sunday School teacher, nor how much good may be accomplished by giving a proper direction to the first moral and religious ideas of children. But we *do* hope, that the mere statement of these facts, will be a sufficient argument to induce many who now stand aloof, to engage in the work with heart and hand.

REPORT

OF THE

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

OF THE

BOSTON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

FOR THE YEAR, 1830.

Mr President:

The good influences which the members of this Society thought they had seen spreading from Sunday schools, which they had watched with much care, and in which they had been engaged as teachers, created a desire that, as soon as this institution should be organized, information concerning the state of these schools should be given by the secretary to all the parishes in the country from which we might hope to receive aid in improving the mode of Sunday school instruction; and in endeavoring to induce the establishment of similar schools in all parishes where it should be found practicable and expedient to do so.

This, it will be remembered, was done in the spring of 1827. Several schools were commenced very soon after, and continued through the following summer and autumn; but although communications were solicited from such as had been in operation, not more than five had given reports to this society at the time of its first annual meeting in the same year.

Previous to the annual meeting in 1828, reports were obtained from 28 distant schools: all giving the information which was desired, and furnishing the fullest evidence of an increasing attention to the subject, and

of a favorable commencement in the work of Sunday school instruction.

The number of reports received in 1829, were 46, and the whole number of schools which we had recorded at the time of our last annual meeting was 58, consisting of 5585 children and 890 teachers.

The number of reports which have been received this year is 65, exceeding that of the last by 19, and the whole number of schools we have now on record is 86, showing an increase of 29 for this year. Giving, therefore, a total number at this time of 7820 children, and 1295 teachers.—The additional number of children being 2235, and of teachers 405.

It is evident from what we have now stated that these schools have rapidly increased since the establishment of this society. It would seem to us that a silent and genial influence has been spread through the medium of communication which has been reciprocally formed between this society and distant parishes. For, at the time our first circular was issued, in May 1827, making known the views and objects of the institution, there had been but 19 Sunday schools commenced in these parishes, some of which had been given up. In that year 12 more were commenced. In the year 1828, 22 were added to the number. In 1829, 15 more; during the last year, the list has been increased by 16. The dates of four are unknown.

The general state of the schools, the estimation in which they are held by those who have an interest in them, the efforts which are making to improve them; and, also, the obstacles which are still in the way of their advancement, will be seen by some brief extracts from the reports furnished from the ministers of the parishes, or the superintendents of the schools.

That these schools are viewed in a favorable light in the societies in which they have been commenced, we learn from almost every correspondent.

Thus, from Hingham we are informed that, 'the school has been better attended during the past season than in any preceding. Its state has been superior in every respect to what it has ever been before; and both parents and children seem to have felt more interest in its welfare.'—And from Kingston and Dedham almost in the same words it is stated: 'Our school has lost nothing of its interest, either with parents, pupils, or teachers, during the past year.'

The pastor in Sterling writes, 'I am happy to be able to say that our school has continued to flourish since its establishment in 1827. And every year's experience brings new proof of its beneficial influence upon scholars, teachers, and parents. And I am persuaded that none of my time is more profitably spent than the hours I devote to the school and the teachers meetings.'

The pastor in Worcester in his observations on the 'great value of such schools among them,' observes, 'besides the instructions which are given, and the religious impressions that are received, they tend to break down the distinctions which exist in almost all religious societies, and bring all to the same level, as they should be in the sanctuary of God. The children of the rich and the poor are brought together—they receive books from a common library—and lessons from a common instructor, and here they cannot but feel an interest for each other. This interest will continue as they grow up, and the members of the society will be bound together as the members of an house hold.'

By the pastor of the parish in Princeton we are informed 'a school has been in operation there for twelve years, and the moral and religious influence of it has been good; a large number of those who were scholars in it when it was organized are now respectable and exemplary members of the church. And three-fourths of our present teachers have been our Sunday school scholars.'

A superintendent in Concord, N. H., after furnishing a gratifying account of the school, closes by saying 'the children are regular in their attendance, and apparently interested in the exercises; and on the whole we have much to encourage us to renewed exertions in this good cause, which is emphatically the cause of benevolence, the cause of God, and which he will delight to bless, if we on our part faithfully discharge the truths which have been committed to us.'

The efforts which are made in the parish in Kennebunk will show in no small degree of how much service it is considered to be, even under great inconveniences, to continue these schools uninterruptedly through the year. The minister and principal superintendent remarks 'We regard it as of great importance that the school should not be discontinued during the winter, as is the practice in some religious societies. The teachers lose, by so doing, no small portion of that interest in the school which is so essential to the attainment of those objects for which it was established. They lose also in some degree the faculty of imparting instruction, which is so important to those who would become successful teachers, and which can only be acquired by long continued practice. The children, also, from the habit of spending the sabbath as they do other days, and having nothing of a suitable character to employ their time and attention, besides loseing any good impressions which they may have received during their attendance at school, are in a very unsuitable frame for receiving instruction, after having been neglected for six months.

'Indeed, in relation to a part of our scholars, we are under the necessity of subjecting them to the evils arising from an absence from the school during this period, though we endeavor in some degree to obviate these by making it the duty of the teachers to visit them at least once a month, and to enter into such conversation with them as may keep alive in their minds the princi-

ples which have been imparted, and to cherish that interest in the school and its duties, without which all the labors of the teachers are useless.'

The schools from which we have heard are not confined to the children of their several parishes, but all enter who desire to do so.

And we think it worthy of particular notice here, that in the account given us of one school, in which there are 100 children, and 19 teachers, the latter are of four different denominations, and about an equal number of each. They thus associate under a regulation which forbids any thing to be taught in the school of a sectarian character,—nothing in religion but the simple, plain, and undisputed doctrines of the New Testament. 'These teachers,' the report says 'are all laboring together in this holy cause,' 'in the unity of the spirit, and in the bond of christian peace.'

The information which has been sent us relative to the government and modes of instruction, shows that most of the schools are conducted on the same general plan as those in our city. In almost all of them catechisms and manuals are more or less in use in the classes; yet there appears to be a general inclination to dispense with them, except as text-books for the teachers. In a few schools, however, a set of these books are adopted as class-books, and regularly used throughout the school. In the school in Cambridge, which was formed in 1828, a change has lately been made from a system of oral instruction to the use of manuals for a part of the exercises in almost all the classes; and it is considered by the superintendent as an improvement.

In three of the schools, we are informed that instead of an introductory prayer, the exercises are commenced by reading or repeating a form, consisting of short and simple sentences, to which the children respond. And this is found to have a favorable effect, in producing the attention which is desired, in the children.

In Atkinson (Maine) and Trenton (N. Y.) there are Sunday schools under the direction of a few female teachers. That of the former has been continued since 1823, although there has been no regular preaching in the place, nor any church established. It is in a prosperous state, and a small christian society has been formed in this place in the course of the last summer. We find both these schools, and some others, laboring under a great disadvantage from the want of books. Their libraries, for the children, are too scantily supplied to satisfy even their very moderate demands.

In the schools which had been reported at the time of our last meeting we found the number of libraries to be forty-one, in which there were about 11,000 books. The number of libraries we find now increased to sixty-seven, and containing about 17,665 volumes. This part of the Sunday school establishment is of infinite value; exerting an influence which operates more steadily than any thing else on the minds of the children. This appears to be acknowledged in almost every instance where our correspondents have mentioned the subject particularly. By one (in Amesbury,) we are told, 'We have a small library for the children, selected with great care. We find it to be very useful, almost of equal importance to any thing relating to the school. From another (in Berlin;) 'We have a juvenile library; the parents have entered warmly into my views for establishing it, and the contributions for this purpose have greatly exceeded my expectations. The books are read with increasing avidity and advantage.' Our correspondent in Taunton, writes, 'The children, at the close of the afternoon service, collect around the little library, and under the direction of their several teachers, select the book to be read during the week. The use of the library we consider among the greatest benefits resulting from our Sunday school, as the children feel a great desire to avail themselves of the privilege.'

But it is evident that the advantages of Sunday schools are not confined to the children. A stimulus is furnished which is exciting those who engage in them as teachers, to personal improvement and mutual instruction. They are lead to read more, to think more and to seek information from conversation.

The improvement which is stated to have taken place in the state or management of any school, we find generally attributed to the influence of meetings held by the teachers for mutual improvement, and to the aid and encouragement given by the pastor, through his personal attention to the school, and his instructions at these meetings. Were such meetings are well attended, and the minister takes an interest and a part in the concerns of the school, it is remarkable, in the accounts given us, that all difficulties are easily removed, the work prospers, and there is an increasing assurance that good is effected.

The advantages resulting from these schools, do not end here. Individuals, the heads of families who have leisure and inclination to attend, are admitted to the meetings of the teachers. This is stated to be the case in several parishes ; and thus parents are brought to co-operate more perfectly with those who meet their children in the Sunday school class. And in some of the towns, libraries have been commenced for the use of teachers and parents, which are already in a very favorable state.

In connexion with these statements, we have one quotation more to make, with which we shall close our report. It contains the remarks of one who has been for a considerable time engaged as a Sunday school teacher, and who has not long since left our Theological school to take charge of a distant parish. 'I hope,' he observes, 'you will find by the reports of the present year, that teachers' meetings have become universal. They are in the highest degree important in order to produce a spirit of co-operation and of mutual

interest; in order that each teacher should feel a concern in the whole school, that each may be aided in his difficulties and sustained under his discouragements by the united experience and sympathy of all; that new views may be struck out, and new zeal excited by mutual discussion; and especially that difficult passages of scripture which teachers are desirous of bringing before their classes, but which they feel unable satisfactorily to explain, may be considered, and if possible, explained. I hold it to be impossible that a Sunday school can ever be carried to the highest degree of usefulness whose teachers never hold meetings. And, by teachers meetings, I mean not a mere social gathering once a week or fortnight, at which every topic is touched upon except the school, but a *bona fide teachers meeting*, at which the interests of the school are actually the principle object.

'At one of the annual meetings of your society, I remember hearing great complaint made of a scarcity of teachers. I have sometimes heard the objection made by persons who were requested to become teachers, that they wished to have the whole time of the Sabbath to themselves for purposes of individual edification. This has struck me as the most singular of all excuses. It must be presumed to come from one who is sincerely desirous of making the best improvement of holy time, and yet I do not see how it could be considerately urged by such a person. Must it not appear obvious to any one, even to one who never tried the experiment, that there can be no way so certain and effectual of exciting a deep religious sentiment in one's heart, as explaining the simple and affecting truths of the gospel in the plain manner in which they must be explained to the young breast?

'To a person who sincerely makes the objection I have mentioned, I would say, if on some Sabbath morning you feel your spirit of devotion languishing, and find yourself unable to excite that fervor you de-

sire, go into a Sunday school and talk to a young child about his heavenly father, and the obedience he owes him; talk to him with a serious and earnest desire to produce an impression, and if your own heart does not soon glow with all the affections you desire to feel, I will no longer insist on your becoming a teacher. I would also suggest whether this delightful and soothing occupation would not be as good a preparation for his public duties, as any that the clergyman could make? After his mind has been fatigued and perplexed by his previous labor, would not his spirits be refreshed and quickend in this way better than by solitary meditation in his study? And would he not enter the pulpit with more zeal and animation? And at the same time he would be making himself acquainted with the children of his flock, securing their affection and giving them that encouragement which they will not fail to derive from the countenance and notice of their pastor.'

A Tabular view of the Sunday Schools of which accounts were received by the Corresponding Secretary of the Boston Sunday School Society, in the years 1828, 1829, *and* 1830.

Towns.	1828. Chil dren	Tea.	Vls. Lib.	1829. Chil dren	Tea.	Vls. Lib.	1830. Chil dren	Tea	Vls. Lib.
Amesbury, Mass.	70	11	100	90	15	100	84	15	125
Andover, N. parish	80	7		100	18	100	100		
Belfast, Me.	60	11		75	15		60	8	
Brewster Mass.	93	12							
Brighton, '	71	20	200						
Baltimore, Md.	60	13					80	15	200
Brooklyn, Conn.	Five district schools.								
Charlestown, Mass.	250	35					220	35	500
Cambridge, '	109	23	74	120	21	242	133	24	230
Cambridgeport, '	155	20		146	20		146	20	
Concord, '	153		400	159	23	500	125	24	450
Chelmsford, '	50	11		65	11	120			
Dennis, '	40	5							
Dublin, '	69	21	700	92	18	800	99	20	800
East Cambridge '	82	25					71	11	100
Hardwick, '	60		150						
Hingham, '	70	10							
' Mr Richardson,				160		300	117	23	270
Kingston, Mass.	75	15		85	19	200	92	15	250
New York, 2d parish,	20	3		104	13	170			
Newburyport, Mass.	80	14	201	80	14	250	42	14	275
Marlboro, '	75	10		150	24	250	175	26	275
Northampton, '	50	12					40	7	
New Bedford, '	35	5		35	5		60	11	200
Portsmouth, N. H.	264	44		276	49		293	48	
Portland, Me.	142	17							
Providence, R. I.				47	13	120	47	13	132
Roxbury, Mass.	good			115	24	850	130	21	900
Sterling, '	200	22					220	33	393
Springfield, '	123	23	250	149	25	300	149	25	300
Waltham '	123	22					102	18	750

Towns.	1829. Children	Tea	Vls. Lib.	1830. Children	Tea	Vls. Lib
Ashby, Mass.	100	16	368	142	23	516
Atkinson, Maine,	30	5	160	33	3	200
Augusta, '	54	13	200			
Bridgewater, (North)	64	10	90	40	8	60
Bridgewater (East)	130	22	150	148	23	200
Barnstable, Mass.	80	12	100			
Charlton, '	30	6				
Concord, N. H.	48	10	150	66	11	220
Dedham Mass.	80	15	200	120	19	270
Dover, '	65	10	150	65	10	168
Danvers, '	50	10	290			
Dorchester, '	104	15	200			
Dover, N. H.	82	14	180	104	16	100
Eastport, Maine,	120	24	240	100	18	300
Hallowell, '	63	12	100			
Kennebunk, '	190	25	800	190	20	900
Lexington, '	200	25	200	200	25	200
Littleton, '	121	10	200			
Plymouth, '	186	26	240	195	26	284
Rochester, N. Y.	40	5				
Sandwich, Mass.	130	15	500			
Stoughton, '	44	7				
Warwick, '	200	15	160	200	15	160
West Cambridge, Mass.	98	21	130			
Worcester, '	100	16	250	120	20	250
Walpole, '	100	11	300			

	1830.		
Augusta, Geo.	18	9	240
Beverly, Mass.	50	10	102
Berlin, '	100	18	130
Beverly, Mr T.	205	48	200
Bernardston,	68	12	100
Belgrade, Maine,	35	4	
Charlemont,	58	7	57
Cincinnati, Ohio,	40		
Castine, Maine,	35	12	175
Dorchester and Milton,	120	14	150
Deerfield, Mass.	80	13	300
Framingham,	85	15	130
Framingham,	100	19	300

1830.

Towns.	Children	Teachers	Vols Lib.
Keene, N. H.	70	12	250
Lowell, Mass.	50	15	100
Lynn, '	121	28	180
Lancaster, '	322	49	250
Northfield, '	185	22	224
Newton, Upper Falls,	48	9	125
Philadelphia, Pa.	75	12	160
Princeton,	140	20	250
Roxbury, J. Plains,	83	14	180
Saco, Maine,	97	20	
Trenton, N. Y.	40	6	
Taunton, Mass.	148	20	270
Weston, '	60	13	200
Washington city,	46	11	170
Walpole, N. H.	70	10	170
Wilton, N. H.	112	28	160

THE

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

READ AT THE

SECOND PUBLIC MEETING OF THE SOCIETY,

MAY 30, 1832.

BOSTON:
GRAY AND BOWEN.
1832.

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FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT.

Mr President, — At all the preceding anniversary meetings of our Society it has been thought expedient, first to present a Report of the Sunday Schools in this city which were associated to form this Institution, and then to offer in a distinct Report the information which had been received relative to the schools in other parts of the country.

This has been done for the purpose of bringing before the members of this Society, and its assembled friends, a view of the gradual increase of the number of these schools and of the growing interest with which the objects of them have been pursued.

The account of what has been done in each succeeding year, and the encouraging voices of influential friends which have been heard in this house have, we believe, been greatly instrumental in directing the attention of individuals and of christian societies to the moral and religious instruction of children.

But, in consequence of the few changes in the state of the Boston schools, the communications which we have to make at this time, will be brought into the single Report which is now before you.

As the first movements of this Society were but a

doubtful experiment, there having been but very few Sunday schools formed in the parishes which were expected to join us in our efforts, the first object which it seemed desirable to see affected, was, the establishment of a Sunday school in each parish, on some plan which had been tried and found practicable and useful.

A great number are now in operation, and new ones are constantly forming. There is full evidence of a feeling of consent, and even desire among christians in every part of the country, to try the experiment of establishing and supporting Sunday schools, while they shall be able to see effects sufficiently beneficial to demand a continuance of the exertions which they require.

Yet discouraging circumstances will occur, obstacles will be presented, and doubts will arise in the minds of some who have not been long engaged in the work of Sunday school instruction. But it is the duty of those who have overcome most of the difficulties which will at first be presented, to do all in their power to remove them from the paths of others. And this can be done in a very important degree, by the members and friends of this Society, in attending to the calls of those who are laboring in the cause in different parts of the community, and in endeavoring to furnish the aids which are known to be wanting both to teachers and children.

Although it has been shown, in the previous Annual Reports of this Society, that enough has been done to render its good influences permanent, even were its operations now to be suspended, yet there remains much to be achieved to render Sunday schools what they *ought to be.*

There are, no doubt, errors in the modes of conducting

them, which are to be corrected. There are wants to be supplied. And we need not deny, that there are circumstances connected with them, which, through superficial observation, may appear to be evils.

This being the case, we must be willing to view the subject as it is; for we believe, that everything which has a bearing on the interests and advancement of these schools, be it ever so slight, deserves the serious consideration of this Society.

And, therefore, after briefly stating some of the facts relative to the condition of the schools, and noticing some of the operations of the Society which it is one of the objects of this meeting to have presented, and which are of a character to show us the bright side of the picture, we shall endeavor to give a full view of the opposite, by pointing out the difficulties and discouragements to which we have adverted, as they have been communicated to us by correspondents.

Since the date of our last Report there has been no addition to the number of our Boston schools. We have received reports from the eleven which were then connected with the Society, and find them in a state as much deserving the exertions of their friends to support and elevate them, as at any time since they were established. The number engaged in them is greater than at the time of the last year's Report, viz. one thousand three hundred and sixty children, and two hundred and fortythree teachers. Showing an increase of twentyeight children and nine teachers.

It is gratifying to find, in the account of one of these schools, that the Superintendent is enabled to give much minute and important information relative to the different

classes, by quoting the well drawn Reports which have been furnished him by the teachers.

In the desire for improvement and usefulness, in another school, we are informed, that the most remarkable evidence of these results, from the efforts which are made to sustain with spirit the exercises of the teachers' meetings, and to give variety to them, so that there may be a suitable interest excited. For this purpose one meeting is devoted to Scripture expositions, a second to the discussion of some question. And at a third, a written exercise by one of the teachers is presented on some topic relating to moral and religious instruction. And these are continued alternately through the year, as often as once a month.

In this way these meetings are not only rendered profitable to those who are engaged in them, but each teacher is thereby enabled to do more for the improvement of his class in the Sunday school.

And in a third instance, the effect of the school on the character and deportment of the children is strikingly noticed as being that which we ought above all things to hope for.

But all is not improvement and success. Nor are discouraging circumstances or apprehended evils withheld from the reports. For it is somewhat apparent, that zeal, punctuality, and a becoming preparation for the labors of the school are in no degree superabundant with all who engage in them. On the other hand, the most assiduous efforts of the teachers, will, for certain seasons, be followed by no proportionate improvement in the children. And it has been found from time to time that some of the oldest children, particularly the boys, have left the schools, and this, evidently, from a want of a sufficient number of

able teachers to carry them forward in the most useful part of a Sunday school course. In this way the schools are deprived of those who might soon become the most efficient assistants in leading on the younger classes.

It has been an object in all the schools to procure a suitable library for the use of the children. And it has generally been esteemed an important auxiliary. Yet some very judicious remarks are submitted for our consideration by one of the superintendents, in which their utility, as they are now often conducted, is much doubted. These we shall briefly notice as we proceed to give some account of the schools in other parts of the country.

We come now to say a few words on another of the early objects of the Society. Ever since its organization, an annual subscription has been paid by its members, which, with a few donations, have amounted to about eight hundred dollars. The whole of this sum, with the exception of what has been required for the ordinary expenses of the Society, which have been very small, has been employed, under the direction of a committee, for the publication of books suitable for Sunday school libraries.

Ten small books, a thousand copies each, have been printed; and of one of them, a second edition of a thousand copies. Also a thousand copies of an address by the Rev. Mr. Gannett delivered at a public meeting of the Society in December last. The three annual Reports of the Society in editions of five, twelve, and fifteen hundred copies have been printed, and distributed to all the schools in the city, and to all at a distance from which accounts have been received.

The book publishing part of the Society's labors has

not been so successful as was anticipated. There have been many things to retard its advancement which could not have been foreseen. — Yet all our means have been used, and the Committee have had no inconsiderable tasks in attending to their duty. A great number of MSS. have been received and read although so few have been selected. — But it has been their determination to publish such only as should be worthy of a place in the libraries of our Schools.

The Directors wish not to lose sight of their object, in this work, which is, to see published, as the property of the Society, all the manuals, catechisms, and other class books which are, or may be in general use in our Sunday schools; and, if possible, a sufficient number of approved books for children and youth, to furnish a well stored juvenile library.

We are aware, that with small means and a work which, at first, will present but little if any advantage to the agents which must be employed, and attended likewise with some opposition, the whole must progress slowly. — But we are not yet inclined to despair of success.

The accounts we have recently received from distant schools present a subject which we can contemplate at this time with as much satisfaction as at any former anniversary.

It is probably well known, to all who have taken an interest in this institution, that no provision has been made, till within the last two months, to form any auxiliary connexion with associations of Sunday school teachers beyond the city. We have had no authority to claim from them an annual report of their schools, yet the simple request to this end made through a circular addressed to

the pastor of the parish or the superintendent of the school has been answered in the most prompt and satisfactory manner. — Each year has brought us an increasing number of reports, presenting the fullest evidence that great improvement is made of the means which are possessed for the establishment of Sunday schools, and that they are becoming objects of increasing interest and importance in the community.

The number of schools which have been reported this year is 68, connected with which there are 7167 children and 1153 teachers. This exceeds the number of reports which were sent in last year by 3 only, yet we would remark, that 22 of them are from schools which we have not before heard from, and 9 of these were commenced in the course of the last year. Hence, it will be found, by turning to our last report, that by adding this number to that of our former record, we have a total of 108 schools, and an increase of 1658 children and 310 teachers.

As on former occasions, these reports come to us with many assurances of sympathy with the Society in the prosecution of its objects, and full of a good spirit which has evidently been kindled by reviewing the state of the schools from which they are sent. Some, indeed, close their statements with expressions of doubt and misgiving, after viewing some of the objects which embarrass their procedure, and retard their improvement. But it is remarkable that these come not from the schools that have been the longest in operation. And it may not be wholly unimportant, therefore, to mention in this connexion, some of the measures which are adopted to promote the improvement of those from which we are addressed in a spirit that bids us *strive*, and not be weary with well doing.

In one instance, we are told that great care is taken in forming the school, to engage those only for teachers who, besides having the knowledge which is requisite, give evidence of a desire to work faithfully in the cause. "Poor teachers," say some of our correspondents, "are worse than none."

In other instances it is stated that on the regular meetings of the teachers for mutual improvement and a preparation for particular duties, depends the very life of the school. These meetings are conducted, in many places, in a similar manner to that we have mentioned in this city.

Associations of parents and other individuals of the parish are also formed to support the expenses of the school; — and these often meet with the teachers to hear a lecture from their pastor on some subject which is introduced in the course of Sunday school instruction.

Classes of adults and youths are formed, who place themselves under the instruction of the pastor or some competent teacher, and, in this way, prepare themselves for the duties of the school.

Parish or church libraries are established, for the use of teachers and others.

The children are encouraged to meet in small companies as they may have opportunity, in the course of each week to review the lessons of the previous Sunday.

Where such plans are pursued, and suitable changes are made from time to time with a single view to improvement, there can be no want of success in the school.

We have in former Reports mentioned the libraries for children, because they have been, and still are, conisder-

ed an important aid when under a good regulation ; not only on account of the attraction they present to the children, but because they create, in some, a taste for serious reading and study. Almost every school has its library, containing from one hundred to four hundred books. The number in all amounting to 21,546, including an increase since last year of 3881 volumes.

There are many persons who think well of Sunday schools for those children whose parents cannot attend to their instruction, or for those who have neither parents nor guardians, to do it ; but who believe that these schools tend to diminish the attention of parents to the religious instruction of their children — that the work is taken out of the parents hands by the Sunday school teacher, or, at least, that parents are inconsiderately led to give up their children to the care of strangers. — To such, we are happy in being able to say that this subject has been mentioned in some of the reports from those schools whose influence has been the longest felt, and the very reverse of what is apprehended, on this point, is the result. — Parents are, gradually, doing more to help their children to correct views of moral and religious duty than they ever did before they sent them to a Sunday school.

But we have said that there are doubts and difficulties to be removed, and wants to be supplied some of which are really, at present, sufficient to produce discouragement in the minds of many.

The first, we would mention, arises from the connexion of libraries with these schools, or, perhaps, more strictly, from the selection of them, and the indiscriminate manner in which the children are often allowed to take out the books.

The following remarks are from the report of a superintendent in this city to which we have already alluded.

Speaking of the library, he observes, "under this head we wish to remark that at the public meetings of your Society, Sunday school libraries have uniformly been referred to in general terms of favor, without sufficiently, if at all, bringing into view the evils which may result from the injudicious use of them. We fear that some regard Sunday school libraries as sources of unmingled good; and think that if the books are sought with avidity, and read with interest, all must surely be well. So far are we from adopting this opinion, that we believe the chief danger lies in *this very interest*, and that on the control of this, it depends, whether a library shall prove a good, or an evil in disguise."

"We may be permitted to point out as briefly as possible what we have felt, experimentally, to be evils."

"We think it an evil to spend the whole, or a chief part of the time we are together, in selecting books from the library, when we have assembled to impart religious instruction. We think the possession of the books by the children, while the teacher would claim their attention to his, perhaps less pleasing, though more profitable conversation on religious subjects, an evil. We think it an evil to cultivate in the children a taste for reading every thing which is new, to the exclusion of everything, however good, which has not the attraction of novelty. And this we believe to be the inevitable consequence of allowing the children to select for themselves from catalogues, as is generally practised."

"And should we propose a remedy for these evils, it would be simply to recommend that the teachers select

the books instead of the children, and this too, not without a thorough knowledge of their contents. This simple regulation, it appears to us, would, in the ratio that teachers are competent and faithful, operate to prevent almost all the abuses to which Sunday school libraries are liable."

Similar remarks have been made by several who have mentioned this subject. "Books," say they, "should be carefully excluded from these libraries, which are not calculated to furnish some useful knowledge, or produce some good and lasting impression on the mind." "Many of the stories which are prepared for children," says one, "have ill answered the high purpose of their writers. They have aimed to produce an excitement. If there was not something startling, unexpected or wonderful, the book was deemed dull. An appetite for story and moving incident has thus been created, and the natural consequence, a kind of intellectual gluttony, which like another kind, tends to paralysis."

"Biographical sketches are of exceeding value, where historical facts take the place of arbitrary fanciful delineations. They show what *has been* and *what can be again*. They pour the breath of life into some dormant minds, and create a *healthy* hunger, a *reasonable, laudable curiosity*."

An experienced teacher of youth, in one of the reports, remarks, that, 'the very best book of its size' — considering the relation of its story, the simplicity and purity of its language, the natural delineations of character, and the reality of the scenes described — is *Robert Fowle*. I should consider it a model for Sunday school book writers; and any individual who should write one

of a similar character, I would rank among the benefactors of the young.

Most of the children who enter the Sunday schools remain in them for several years, and a strong attachment is formed between them and their teachers. When, therefore, there is not that degree of improvement evident, which had been anticipated, when the oldest children are leaving the schools for want of more and abler teachers, when the schools are filling with children of a suitable age to receive the greatest good from them, and are crowded into classes already too large for the most efficient teachers to manage — when some parents are indifferent, and others slowly lend their influence to the support of these schools — when a part of the laborers become discouraged and relinquish their duties — when these things happen, then have the conscientious and persevering teachers much to contend with. — Yet, judging from the accounts we have received, there are few who do not have to contend with some of them.

Most of our Sunday schools are so conducted, that each teacher forms his own plan for proceeding with his class; And after the use of the Bible or New Testament he chooses such other books as he finds best suited to aid him in the plan which he has adopted. Suitable class-books are much wanted to enable the teacher to improve, to the best advantage, the little time he can spend with his class. Such books are called for in almost every communication which we have received. The manuals now familiarly known by the titles of Field's and Allen's Questions, are so important as aids to the study of the New Testament, that they are already in use in nearly every school from which Reports have been received.

We do but repeat the calls of our correspondents when we say, that books are wanted, arranged for the study of the different parts of the Old Testament, as Allen's Questions are for that of the New Testament; and these adapted to the different ages of the children.

Books on natural theology of a suitable character for the youngest children are not to be obtained, for after all the attempts that have been made to bring this subject down to the minds of children, and to furnish a class-book for Sunday schools, Paley's work is still found to be the most clear and simple; yet this is of much too elevated a character, even for many of the oldest classes.

Class-books on sacred history and geography, and on Jewish antiquities are called for. — And catechisms for the younger classes on a better plan than that of any which are in use. A dictionary of the Bible, for the use of teachers and children, is wanted. Calmut's is too unwieldy and expensive — and those of moderate size and cost are not wholly unobjectionable, if they are to be put into the hands of children.

While almost every science is furnishing its class-books for our infant and primary schools, we most sincerely hope that these calls from our Sunday schools will not be disregarded.

Although there are so many schools now in operation, most of them have been so short a time in existence, that they cannot be considered as firmly established. They have been formed, as we trust, from pure motives, and for a holy purpose. They are now to be sustained — and this is to be done by the friends of a pure and holy religion. They are calculated, under the blessing of God, to be instrumental in spreading the influences of this reli-

gion; and thereby, in a very important degree, to affect all the *social, civil,* and *even political interests of our country.* To render them as useful as they may be, there must be, constantly, more and more done to elevate their character, and improve their condition. And this must be accomplished by the united efforts of those Christian parishes in which they are founded.

We therefore earnestly call on those whose age and acquirements fit them for the situation, to join us in the delightful duties of these schools. We at the same time look up to those whose profession, learning and talents qualify them for the tasks; and solicit their aid in supplying these wants of the schools which we have enumerated. And we respectfully invite *all,* who can approve what we have done, to unite with us in such a manner as will enable us to prosecute with vigor all the work which we have begun.

A Tabular view of the Boston Sunday Schools, as reported in May, 1832, at the last Annual Meeting of the SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

Names.	Children.	Teachers.	Vols. Lib.	Superintendents.
Hancock Sunday School,	156	25	200	F. T. Gray.
Purchase Street do.	100	21	300	N. A. Barrett.
Howard do. do.	85	16	250	E. Cobb.
Chamber do. do.	216	34		L. G. Pray.
Chauncey Place do.	115	23	400	W. B. Sumner.
Hollis Street do.	153	30	200	J. Dall, M. S. Perry.
South Congregational do.	140	24	500	C. Bowen
New North do.	100	14	300	E. Blake, S. J. Beal
Brattle Street do.	145	26		J. W. Bond.
Federal do do.	80	14	150	J. F. Flagg.
Christian do.	70	14	90	J. Kellogg.

A Tabular view of the Sunday Schools of which accounts were received by the Corresponding Secretary of the Boston Sunday School Society, in the years 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, and 1832.

Towns.	1828.			1829.			1830.			1831		
	Chi	Te	Vls Lib	Chi	Te	Vls Lib	Chi	Te	Vls Lib	Chi	Teach ers.	Vls. Lib.
Amesbury, Mass.	70	11	100	90	15	100	84	15	125	67	14	150
Andover, N. parish	80	7		100	18	100	100					
Belfast, Me.	60	11		75	15		60	8		60	12	170
Brewster, Mass.	93	12										
Brighton, "	71	20	200									
Baltimore, Md.	60	13					80	15	200			
Brooklyn, Conn.	Five district schools.									45	10	245
Charlestown, Mass.	250	35					220	35	500	235	35	650
Cambridge, "	109	23	74	120	21	242	133	24	230	112	20	250
Cambridgeport, "	155	20		146	20		146	20		90	18	
Concord, "	153		400	159	23	500	125	24	450	163	20 to 30	580
Chelmsford, "	50	11		65	11	120						
Dennis, "	40	5								42	7	60
Dublin, "	69	21	700	92	18	800	99	20	800	115	31	1013
East Cambridge "	82	25					71	11	100	60		200
Hardwick, "	60		150									
Hingham, "	70	10								70	10	
" Mr Richardson,				160		300	117	23	270	130	25	300
Kingston, Mass.	75	15		85	19	200	92	15	250	82	16	325
New York, 2d parish,	20	3		104	13	170						
Newburyport, Mass.	80	14	201	80	14	250	42	14	275			
Marlboro' "	75	10		150	24	250	175	26	275	62	12	350
Northampton, "	50	12					40	7				
New Bedford, "	35	5		35	5		60	11	200	50	9	
Portsmouth, N. H.	264	44		276	49		293	48		314	48	
Portland, Me.	142	17										
Providence, R. I.				47	13	120	47	13	132	56	11	240
Roxbury, Mass.	good			115	24	850	130	21	900	154	20	
Sterling, "	200	22					220	33	393	230	32	445
Springfield, "	123	23	250	149	25	300	149	25	300			
Waltham, "	123	22					102	18	750	150	30	600

Towns.	1829. Chi	Te	Vls Lib	1830. Chi	Te	Vls Lib	1831. Chi	Tea	Vls. Lib.
Ashby, Mass.	100	16	368	142	23	516			
Atkinson, Me.	30	5	160	33	3	200			
Augusta, "	54	13	200				60	13	275
Bridgewater, (North)	64	10	90	40	8	60			
Bridgewater, (East)	130	22	150	148	23	200			
Barnstable, Mass.	80	12	100						
Charlton, "	30	6							
Concord, N. H.	48	10	150	66	11	220	85	15	300
Dedham, Mass.	80	15	200	120	19	270			
Dover, "	65	10	150	65	10	168			
Danvers, "	50	10	290						
Dorchester, "	104	15	200						
Dover, N. H.	82	14	180	104	16	100			
Eastport, Maine,	120	24	240	100	18	300	105	26	260
Hallowell, "	63	12	100				100	16	222
Kennebunk, "	190	25	800	190	20	900	135	20	900
Lexington, Mass.	200	25	200	200	25	200	150	24	250
Littleton, "	121	10	200				114	17	
Plymouth, "	186	26	240	195	26	284	160	26	350
Rochester, N. Y.	40	5							
Sandwich, Mass.	130	15	500				63	11	800
Stoughton, "	44	7							
Warwick, "	200	15	160	200	15	160	110	19	200
West Cambridge, Mass.	98	21	130						
Worcester, "	100	16	250	120	20	250	120	20	300
Walpole, "	100	11	300						

	1830.			1831.		
Augusta, Geo.	18	9	240			
Beverly, Mass.	50	10	102	50	9	124
Berlin, "	100	18	130	100	18	130
Beverly, Mr T.	205	48	200			
Bernardston,	68	12	100	50	9	100
Belgrade, Maine,	35	4				
Charlemont,	58	7	57			
Cincinnati, Ohio,	40			50	10	300
Castine, Maine,	35	12	175			
Dorchester and Milton,	120	14	150			
Deerfield, Mass.	80	13	300			
Framingham,	85	15	130	100	17	260
Framingham, [Saxonville]	100	19	300	75	19	150

Towns.	1830. Chi	Te	Vls. Lib.	1831. Chi	Te	Vls Lib
Keene, N. H.	70	12	250	80	15	275
Lowell, Mass.	50	15	100	60	11	150
Lynn. "	121	28	180	124	28	228
Lancaster	322	49	250	221	41	380
Northfield,	185	22	224			
Newton, Upper Falls,	48	9	125			
Philadelphia, Pa.	75	12	160	71	10	160
Princeton,	140	20	250			
Roxbury, Jamaica Plains,	83	14	180	55	12	140
Saco, Maine,	97	20		75	19	300
Trenton, N. Y. [Oldenbarneweld]	40	6		40	6	
Taunton, Mass.	148	20	270	125	14	400
Weston, "	60	13	200	46	13	
Washington city,	46	11	170			
Walpole, N. H.	70	10	170			
Wilton, N. H.	112	28	160			

	1832.		
Bangor,	70	12	200
Billerica,	100		150
Brookline,	91	16	300
Canton,	86	23	175
Charleston, S. C.	35	1	150
Chelsea,	71	11	283
Kennebunk, 2d School,	26		
Marblehead,	225	42	
Meadville, Pa.	45	7	100
Medfield,	101	25	150
Mendon,	60	12	100
New Salem,	68	18	137
New York, 1st parish,	50	14	150
Northborough,	150	36	266
Provincetown,	43	6	175
Rowe,	50	8	70
Roxbury, S. P.	60	10	200
Salem, Rev. Mr F.	117	28	375
Salem, Rev. Mr T.	83	21	
Sherburne,	91	15	250
Stow,	120	20	150
Waltham, Rev. Mr R.	100	9	400
Watertown,	120	18	300
West Dedham,	50	10	200

The subjoined article is appended to this report in conformity to a vote of the Directors of the S. S. Society, and in the hope that the attention of Superintendents and Teachers of S. Schools will be led by it to consider the objects for which such a provision was made in the constitution of the Society: viz. To strengthen the bond of union between associations of teachers in the city and other parts of the country, to furnish an opportunity for teachers at a distance to take a more active part in the transaction of the Society, and to have a voice in all matters which relate to its most important concerns, so far as this can conveniently be done; — and to induce all who are earnestly laboring for the encouragement and improvement of Sunday Schools, to aid in the advancement of an institution which has already been productive of much good, and the usefulness of which may be still increased.

Many of the schools in the country will be closing, as the cold season approaches, and reports from them, in anticipation of the annual meeting of the Society in May next, will be received by the secretary; an attention to this object will save some expense to the Society, and some trouble, in the printing and distributing of circulars; a measure which has been heretofore adopted for obtaining returns from each school, but which will be omitted this year, in the hope that reports will be sent from all the schools in due season, and without any further solicitation than that of a brief notice published in the Christian Register.

ARTICLE XI.

"Any association of teachers who shall vote to become auxiliary to this society, and notify the Corresponding Secretary of the same, shall be authorized to send one or more delegates to its meetings, who shall be entitled to all the privileges of membership, and shall receive the annual reports and other casual publications of the Society; and be required to furnish annually a report of the condition of the school to which they belong."

At the last Annual Meeting of the Sunday School Society for the election of Officers, the following gentlemen were chosen, viz.

President.

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

Vice Presidents.

WILLIAM SULLIVAN, Boston, Mass.
HENRY WARE, Jr, Cambridge, "
JOSEPH ALLEN, Northborough, "
STEPHEN C. PHILLIPS, Salem, "
WILLIAM P. RICE, Cincinnati, Ohio.
JOHN W. FOSTER, Portsmouth, N. H.
SAMUEL GILMAN, Charleston, S. C.
S. G. BULFINCH, Augusta, Geo.

J. F. FLAGG, *Cor. Sec'ry*, Boston.
THOMAS GRAY, Jr. *Rec. Sec'ry*. "
GEORGE A. SAMPSON, *Treasurer*, "

THE

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING THE TWENTY-EIGHTH OF MAY, 1833.

BOSTON:

LILLY, WAIT, COLMAN, AND HOLDEN.

1833.

ANNUAL REPORT.

Since the establishment of this Society, in 1827, the Directors of the institution have caused to be presented, at each public Annual Meeting, a statement of the origin and progress of the Sunday Schools which have been formed in the Unitarian Parishes of this city and other parts of the country. In doing this, they have been able to show, at each succeeding anniversary, a gradual increase of the number of these schools, and to furnish evidence, from the reports of their superintendents, that there has been a growing interest in their favor, and an increasing activity in those who conduct them, to promote their usefulness.

Numerous facts have been furnished us from year to year, not only of a statistical character, but relating to the mode of conducting these schools, and the happy effects they have produced on the teachers, as well as on the children. These accounts have been collected in our annual reports, and then distributed to all the Sunday Schools, and to the pastor of each parish. In this way, as we have good reason to believe, a more extensive and ardent sympathy has been excited among the friends of these institutions, and an almost simultaneous action produced, which has resulted in the establishment of a Sunday School in nearly every Unitarian parish. And indeed it is remarkable, that since this feeling has been awakened, by a demonstration of the advantages of these schools, in showing the results of a few of them, a new Christian society is hardly

formed, and seldom is its pastor settled, before its Sunday School is organized and put into operation.

But while we rejoice in beholding what has already been done, and feel an assurance that if there is even no diminution of effort, and our Schools are but continued with the same degree of spirit in which they have been commenced, much good will be effected; we have still reason to fear, that unless increasing efforts be made, and greater energy put forth in the cause, there never will be seen that far happier results which these Schools are so eminently calculated to produce. Indeed, without a continual *increasing* effort for their improvement, they must fall into decline.

The teachers who are united by a membership with this society, and those who, at a distance from our city, have contributed to promote the objects of this institution, belong to a denomination of Christian parishes which is not yet very numerous even in our country, and the increase of which will not probably add much, annually to the number of our Sunday Schools; our reports cannot therefore now be confined to a statement of numeral increase and such particulars as have heretofore been matter of great interest to the Society.

Of the many Schools which are now in operation, nearly all are conducted on the same plan, with the exception of a few trifling variations; and this we must attribute to the communication which has in various ways been kept up between the different associations of teachers. If, therefore, any increasing benefit is to be derived from the existence of this Society and its correspondence with the Schools in other parts of the country, it must be through the united efforts of all in laboring for *improvement*, and freely communicating all that is gained in this important work.

The usefulness of these Schools, is no longer considered problematical. And those who have been the most active and have labored the longest in them, are the most unwilling to relinquish this duty, even when other duties or the consideration of health requires it.

The time has arrived when we must not be content to follow

on in a particular routine of the same exercises that were adopted when few of the teachers of those Schools had any experience in the work.

What has already been done in them, has been well, for the short period they have existed ; but where improvement is not evident, discouragement, and even disgust, will follow. There are obstacles in the way of their advancement ; and although we have reports from most of them each year, which speak in terms of encouragement, because of some increase, or unexpected success, yet we are at the same time addressed by a few in the language of complaint, on account of difficulties and discouraging circumstances which have diminished some of the Schools, and seriously threatened the suspension of others.

These complaints were relating to subjects which we thought to be of sufficient importance to be brought before the Society for consideration and remark, at this meeting. And, therefore, with a view to obtain all the information we could in regard to the measures which have been adopted in any of the Schools for removing any of these difficulties, and with the desire of obtaining the opinions of the most experienced Sunday School teachers relative to what *might be done* to remove them, we proposed in our last circular to the Schools, four questions in the following form.

1. It is a common complaint, that our Sunday Schools are in want of a sufficient number of teachers. — How is this deficiency to be supplied ?

2. It is well known that most of the children leave these schools at an earlier age than they would, if suitable teachers could be engaged to guide and assist them in the more advanced parts of Sunday School instruction. — How can we find a remedy for this evil ?

3. The want of suitable manuals or class-books, on some of the subjects of Sunday School study, is still felt, though the call for them has been often repeated. — What measures can be adopted to insure a supply of such as are desired ?

4. As the singing of hymns constitutes a part of our devotional exercises at church and in the Sunday School, it is cer-

tainly of no small consequence, that it should be performed in the best manner that is practicable. — Could not the plan of teaching [the *Pestalozzian* plan] which has been so successfully pursued in this city, by Mr Lowell Mason and Mr George B. Kingsley, for the instruction of children in singing, be more generally adopted, and advantageously practised in all our Sunday Schools, under the direction of any competent teacher of singing ?

It will be readily seen that these questions relate to facts which have great influence on the prosperity of the schools ; and that they have not failed to engage the serious consideration of our correspondents, will appear by extracts from their letters, of which, in justice to them, and to the Society, our report must principally consist.

The two first questions have a mutual bearing on each other, and are therefore in several of the communications answered in connection.

' The difficulty of obtaining suitable teachers and a sufficient number of them,' says a superintendent, ' is felt by us in some degree. The remedy which most obviously suggests itself, is to form in every society, classes of young persons, who are in advance of the school, and of those who have left, or are about to leave it on account of age. These classes to be furnished with a teacher or teachers who shall assist and carry them forward in the study of Natural Theology, the evidences of Christianity, or perhaps Ecclesiastical History. It would seem probable, that a class or classes thus collected and instructed by the pastor or some competent teacher, one or more of whom, it is thought may be found in every parish, would not only be prepared, but disposed at the end of such a course, to become Sunday School teachers. This would also remedy the difficulty complained of in another of your queries, viz., the early age at which the children leave the school for the want of more advanced instruction. This plan has been tried in our parish with some of the female pupils, and has answered every expectation, by furnishing us at this time, in part, with a supply of teachers.

From another experienced teacher we have the following remarks : —

'The two first difficulties mentioned in the circular may be remedied, I apprehend, in some places, if men and women of the first standing in society would personally engage in the business of instruction. In some parishes this is done already, but in others, although they encourage Sunday Schools, yet they do not take a class ; and if they stand aloof, who are best qualified for the duty, *others* will be reluctant to engage in the work ; and the reason is sufficiently obvious. And if teachers of the kind mentioned are engaged in the school, its character is raised higher in the estimation of the community, the instruction will be better, and the scholars will be likely to remain longer in the school.'

The observations of another are,

'In regard to the deficiency of teachers, we think the most direct method of supply to consist in raising them from among the pupils themselves : but in this there is a difficulty, only to be obviated by the remedy required in the case mentioned in the second question, viz. that of the children leaving the school too early, having finished the course of study usually pursued in the school, and being yet unqualified for teachers.'

'We believe, however, that the received notions in regard to Sunday School instruction require to be re-examined. The subject should be viewed in its more extensive relations. Its sphere of action and operation should be so enlarged, that naught but the veil which separates time from eternity should mark its boundary.'

'There is now too great an interval between Teachers and Taught. This should be filled up, and we would do it by a systematic arrangement, forming a regular gradation of the various subjects of moral discipline, so adapted, that every stage of earthly existence should have its appropriate part and lot in the matter. We think that religious instruction should commence as soon as the mind is susceptible of moral impressions, and that it should continue on in one unbroken chain through life.'

We cannot withhold the remarks of one other of the zealous

friends of our cause, who, after expressing a similar opinion to those we have already quoted on the subject of obtaining teachers, adds,

'Is it not probable that we overrate the importance of mere *literary* qualifications in the Sunday School teacher? I certainly would not speak disparagingly of human learning; but after all, a sincere and warm-hearted piety is the great desideratum in one who assumes the office of a religious teacher. Without this, he cannot feel much interest in his labor, and will probably soon become discouraged, and weary of his work. But where this is found, it will atone for almost every other defect. This will not only prompt him to patient continuance in well-doing, but will give him a readiness of utterance, and earnestness of manner, and an aptness to teach, which will greatly increase his power, and facilitate his labor. Let us only be furnished with such teachers, and I think we shall have good schools.'

We have often had occasion to observe that, when the duty of a Sunday School teacher is mentioned, it is too often spoken of as a *task;* the words *difficulty*, *confinement*, *self-sacrifice*, and the like, are too frequently used. But let us observe the language of the writer whom we have just quoted, who is the pastor of a parish. When speaking of the subject of supplying teachers for the schools, he says,

'I would suggest too, whether it might not be expedient for the pastor to make personal application to such persons as he may deem best qualified for the office of teachers; and to set before them the *obligation*, the *honor*, and the *privilege* of using the talents that God has given them for training the young mind to knowledge and virtue. If suitable persons are not at present to be found, let it be his first object to supply the deficiency by raising up such as are wanted — *intelligent*, *zealous*, *devoted* Christians, thoroughly furnished to every good work.'

In answer to our second question, the same writer remarks, 'In order to secure the attendance of the older pupils, two things are necessary. The first is to do away the impression that the Sunday School is only for children. And the second is

to provide suitable teachers. The first may be effected partly by introducing exercises of a higher character than has been usual ; and partly perhaps by allowing the older pupils to form themselves into Bible classes, under such teachers as they may choose.'

By one who has had much experience as a Sunday School teacher, the third question is thus noticed.

'The subject of manuals is one of great importance. Two or more are much wanted by our school. The first, a catechism or manual for children who have passed through Carpenter's and the Worcester, and are not old enough to commence with Palfrey's or Allen's questions, the Bible History, or Adam's Letters on the Gospels. The other is one on the Evidences of Christianity. On this subject there is no manual which is at all suited to the wants and capacities of children. To obtain these, and some others that are necessary, and would be useful, requires an effort, a sacrifice in fact, on the part of some one who is competent to supply this deficiency. They can scarcely be prepared by one who *is not*, or *has not* been a Sunday School teacher. — The whole nature and extent of the want must be felt by those who would supply it fully and satisfactorily. Good manuals may be supplied by others, but they would hardly satisfy the expectations of the practical teacher. It is for those then who are engaged in the work, and have the ability to create within themselves the resolution to prepare and publish those manuals which are so much needed in our schools.'

In one instance this 3d question is replied to only by asking, 'if the objects of the Society might not be effected by the formation of auxiliary Societies in the several towns or parishes, through which funds might be raised to enable us to offer premiums for the best manuals that should be furnished on given subjects.'

We are happy to be able to state that a Rev. gentleman who has already furnished two important books of questions on parts of the New Testament, is preparing a third, which is to embrace the Acts and Epistles.

An experienced guide in Sunday School teaching, from whom

we have already made some extracts, — observes, ‘ while I think that the principal attention of children in Sunday Schools should be given to the study of the New Testament, I would not have them entirely neglect the Old, parts of which may be studied with advantage by quite young children. I think, however, that great care should be used in the selection ; and that after all, a better knowledge of Jewish History will be gained by reading such a book as Wilman’s History of the Jews, than by reading the Bible itself.

I still think that a manual, ‘ on the Old Testament suited to the higher classes in Sunday Schools is much wanted, and I hope that such a one will be shortly furnished by some one who is competent to the task.’

The fourth question, on the subject of teaching sacred music to the children of our Sunday Schools, has been favorably answered, though but few attempts have been made to give such instruction at any other time than when engaged in the Schools on the Sabbath. The success which has attended the experiments made in this city, of teaching a large number of children at once, has placed the subject beyond all question of its practicability. And the efforts of Mr Mason, and Mr Kingsley, have resulted in exhibiting the powers of children, in the performance of difficult pieces of music, in a manner which has been surprising and delightful even to those of a cultivated and discriminating taste. And Mr Kingsley is now engaged to instruct several of these schools in our city and its vicinity.

Since the last anniversary of this Society, changes have been made in several of the schools which appear to have been very beneficial.

In one, we are informed, ‘ an association of the ladies of the parish, take an oversight of the school, engage teachers, see that children are brought in who would otherwise be neglected, supply the regular class books, make provision for the increase of the library, and from time to time examine the school by a committee appointed for the purpose. The beneficial influence which this association has had on the school,’ as we learn from the pastor, ‘ has been very great.’

In another instance a lady superintendent has been appointed; a part of whose duty it is, to visit the parents of some of the children where it can be done with propriety, that she may inform them more particularly what is required of the children at the school, and endeavor to obtain the aid of a mother or a father in co-operation with the teachers.

In several of the schools, the children have been requested to furnish a written account of the lecture or address given by the pastor or superintendent on the preceding Sunday. The advantage of this exercise has been very evident, in as much as it causes greater attention, and exercises the minds of the children on various subjects while they are out of the school.

In nearly all our Sunday Schools there are libraries containing from one hundred to five hundred books. These are exerting no inconsiderable influence on the minds and characters of the children, as the books are eagerly sought for and generally read. These libraries, therefore, should be objects of great care to the conductors of the schools; and the best mode of furnishing them, as well as the manner in which they should be used, should be subjects of serious consideration to all who are interested in the moral and religious instruction of children. The following remarks, therefore, from a correspondent who has evidently given much thought to this important subject, we cannot omit to lay before you.

'Some of us,' says the writer, 'begin to fear, that the libraries in our Sunday Schools are not exerting an unmixed good influence. Let them be selected with the best judgment, and obtained with the most liberal funds, we fear that the great variety of books offered to children, and the frequency with which they are exchanged, must induce careless habits of reading and reflection, and create a hunger and thirst after book and story *excitement*, which may do a sad work with a child's moral feelings. This ceaseless turning over the pages of a story book is not the way by which principles are to be fixed in the mind and treasured up there. This casual supply and glut of exciting food, is not the way to promote a healthful, mental and moral digestion. We, I cannot doubt, are giving our children too

many books, because our fathers gave us too few. And an indisposition to mental effort, — a craving for artificial excitement, a diseased imagination, a morbid sensibility, will as surely be generated in the minds of children by continually reading most of our Sunday School books, as they will be generated in the minds of "children of a larger growth," by constantly poring over the finished novel, and the exciting romance. It is among our most settled convictions, that the tendencies and effects of our Sunday School Libraries need to be better understood. Our books should be written with more care. Less anxiety should be shown to have a *large library*. The book a child reads should be selected for it by the teacher. It should not be the work of a Sunday evening or a heavy hour to skim over the book and get the story. The child should be examined on the book page after page, chapter after chapter. The questions, Why was this done? And would you have acted so? Why was this said? Was not this opinion wrong? should test the child's thorough understanding of the book, — its principles, representations and conclusions. A book worth a perusal like this, would afford matter of interest and food for a child's mind perhaps for three weeks or a month. Who does not see, that thus reading a few good books, would be vastly more profitable than the ordinary turning over a whole library? Who does not see that in this way a teacher might give solid instruction, and make grave permanent impressions? As our books are read now, it is to be feared that a thoughtless familiarity with sacred things is often induced, and that the imagination is developed to an unhealthful and pernicious extent.'

'I do hope that this subject will meet with the serious attention it deserves. In my mind it demands more consideration than any other topic connected with our system of Sunday School instruction.'

It will be seen by the extracts which we have presented in this report, that those who are engaged in conducting our Sunday Schools are desirous to increase their usefulness, and that they

are prepared to introduce any changes or make any efforts which give fair promise to raise the character of them.

We cannot help thinking therefore, that it should not now be so much our object to increase the number of these schools, as to enquire what is the effect of their operations : Whether they are mere congregations of children and adults assembled to pass an hour on the Sabbath in the manner which each superintendent of a class may determine according to his own feelings or judgment, or whether they are indeed what they purport to be, and ought to be, *schools for moral* and *religious instruction.* Whether as such they are effecting in any reasonable degree the objects for which they have been established ; and above all, to inquire what we can do to render them more and more a blessing to the rising generation.

From the remarks which have been sent us, as well as from a view of the circumstances which surround us, we cannot but gather the conviction, that Sunday Schools are not esteemed even as they deserve to be. That the system itself, the object, or end of Sunday School instruction does not command that deep and solemn interest which its nature requires.

It is not enough to say that the Sunday School is a very good thing, — to send in our children, subscribe our dollar a year, and wish the teachers God speed in their good work ; the object demands more than this. It demands the time of many more who have it to give, the talents and learning of many more who might use them at least one hour on the Sabbath to impart instruction to those who need. It demands in various ways the personal efforts of a greater number of the men and women who are living under the protection, and enjoying the blessings which christianity affords, blessings which they cannot transmit to their children, unless they bequeath them to a moral and religious generation.

Our Sunday Schools will not be what they ought to be, till all parents as well as every professing Christian, are in some way engaged heart and soul in the cause ; till the instruction given in

them shall be extended with such a degree of energy, system, and faithfulness, that nothing shall be left to complete the work but self discipline.

Respectfully submitted by

J. F. FLAGG,

Cor. Sec'y of the S. S. Society.

Boston, May 28th, 1833.

A Tabular View of the Sunday Schools at the time their last Reports were received by the Corresponding Secretary.

Towns.	Children.	Teachers.	Vols.	Date.
Amesbury	67	14	150	1831
Andover, N. Parish	100			1830
Ashby	142	23	516	do.
Atkinson, Me.	33	3	200	do.
Augusta	60	13	275	1831
Augusta, Geo.	18	9	240	1830-3
Belfast, Me.	70	12	250	1833
Brewster, Mass.	93	12		1828
Brighton	71	20	200	do.
Baltimore, Md.	80	15	200	1830
Brooklyn, Conn.	60	13		1833
Do. 2d school	30	4		do.
Bridgewater, (North) Mass.	40	8	60	1830
Bridgewater, (East)	148	23	200	do.
Barnstable	80	12	100	1829
Beverly	50	9	124	1831
Beverly, Rev Mr T.	205	48	200	1830
Berlin	100	18	130	1831
Bernardston	50	9	100	do.
Belgrade, Me.	35	4		1830
Bangor	70	12	200	1832
Billerica, Mass.	100		150	do.
Brookline	91	16	300	1833
Boston, Hancock S. S.	100		260	do.
Do. Purchase St S. S.	100	21	300	1832
Do. Howard St S. S.	165	25		1833
Do. Chamber St S. S.	209	32	300	do.
Do. Chauncey Pl. S. S.	115	23	400	do.
Do. Hollis St S. S.	238	48	337	do.
Do. South Congregational	100	20	500	do.
Do. New North	100	15	330	do.
Do. Brattle St	145	26		do.
Do. Federal St	100	16		do.
Do. Christian	70	14	90	1832

Towns.	Children.	Teachers.	Vols.	Date.
Charlestown	235	35	650	1831
Cambridge	119	21	330	1833
Cambridgeport	90	18		1831
Concord	163	30	580	1831
Chelmsford	65	11	120	1829
Charlton	30	6		do.
Concord, N. H.	85	15	300	1831
Charlemont	58	7	57	1830
Cincinnati, Ohio	50	10	300	1831
Castine, Me.	35	12	175	1830
Canton, Mass.	70	15	203	1833
Chelsea	71	11	283	do.
Charleston, S. C.	35	1	150	do.
Dennis, Mass.	42	7	60	1831
Dublin, N. H.	114	16	1073	1833
Dedham, Mass.	120	19	270	1830
Dover	60	10	214	1833
Danvers	50	10	290	1829
Dorchester, Rev. Dr H.	104	15	200	do.
Dorchester & Milton, Rev. Dr R.	120	14	150	1830
Deerfield	80	13	300	do.
Dover, N. H.	104	16	100	do.
East Cambridge	75	12	250	1833
Eastport, Me.	105	26	260	do.
Framingham, Mass.	100	17	260	1831
Framingham, (Saxonville)	75	19	150	do.
Hardwick	60		150	1828
Hingham, (Rev. Mr B.)	100	20	400	1833
Hingham, (Rev. Mr R.)	130	25	300	1831
Hallowell, Me.	75	16	380	1833
Kingston, Mass.	82	16	325	1831
Kennebunk	135	20	900	do.
Kennebunk, (2d school)	26			1832
Keene, N. H.	80	15	275	1831
Lexington, Mass.	150	24	250	do.
Littleton	114	17		do.
Lowell	60	11	150	do.
Lynn	124	28	228	do.
Lancaster	221	41	380	do.
Louisville, Kentucky	31	10	100	1833
Marlboro'	62	12	350	1831
Marblehead	225	42		1832
Meadville, Pa.	45	7	100	do.
Medfield, Mass.	101	25	150	do.
Mendon	60	12	100	do.
Newburyport	42	14	275	1830
New York, (Rev. Mr L.)	104	13	170	1829
Northampton	40	7		1830
New Bedford	50	9		1831
Northfield	185	22	224	1830
Newton, (Upper Falls)	48	9	125	do.
New Salem	68	18	137	1832
Northborough	139	15	300	1833

Towns.	Children.	Teachers.	Vols.	Date.
New York, (Rev. Mr W.)	50	14	150	1832
Portsmouth, N. H.	314	48		1831
Portland, Me.	142	17		1828
Providence, R. I. (Rev. Mr F.)	60		265	1833
Do. (Rev. Mr H.)	137	36	300	do.
Plymouth, Mass.	160	26	350	1831
Philadelphia, Pa.	71	10	160	do.
Princeton, Mass.	140	20	250	1830
Provincetown	43	6	175	1832
Roxbury, (Rev. Mr P.)	154	20		1831
Rochester, N. Y.	40	5		1829
Roxbury, (Rev. Dr G.)	55	12	140	1831
Roxbury, S. P.	60	10	200	1832
Rowe	50	8	70	do.
Sterling	230	32	445	1831
Springfield	149	25	300	1830
Sandwich	63	11	800	1831
Stoughton	44	7		1829
Saco, Me.	75	19	300	1831
Salem, (Rev. Mr F.)	117	28	375	1832
Do. (Rev. Mr T.)	83	21		do.
Sherburne	91	15	250	do.
Stowe	120	20	150	do.
Trenton, N. Y. (Oldenbomeweld)	40	6		1831
Taunton, Mass.	125	14	400	do.
Waltham	150	30	600	do.
Warwick	110	19	200	do.
West Cambridge	92	21	130	1829
Worcester	120	20	300	1831
Walpole	100	11	300	1829
Weston	50	13	250	1833
Waltham, (Rev. Mr R.)	100	9	400	1832
Watertown	120	18	300	do.
West Dedham	50	10	200	do.
Walpole, N. H.	70	10	170	1830
Wilton	112	28	160	do.
Washington City	46	11	170	do.

THE

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

AND

ADDRESSES AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD ON THE

TWENTY-EIGHTH OF MAY, 1834.

BOSTON:
BENJAMIN H. GREENE.
1834.

TUTTLE AND WEEKS, PRINTERS.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Annual Meeting of the Sunday School Society was held in the Berry Street Church, in Federal Street, (Rev. Dr Channing's,) on Wednesday evening, May 28th, 1834. In the absence of the President, Rev. Dr. Tuckerman, Dr. J. F. Flagg, First Vice President, took the chair at seven o'clock.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. Mr Farley, of Providence; after which, the following Hymn, composed by Dr. Thomas Gray, Jr. for the occasion, was sung with great animation and effect by a large number of Sunday school children from the various religious societies, under the direction of their teacher, Mr Kingsley.

HYMN.

MUSIC BY MR KINGSLEY.

Father! Thou bad'st us come —
Earth's little ones, we raise the grateful strain
To him who made, who bless'd us, — not in vain
Seek we our Father's home;
And to the silent sky
Bending in light above, while all things fair
Send up their solemn mingling incense there,
Lift we our praise on high.

Lord! the young heart is thine —
Teach it to glow, in joy's resplendent hour,
With grateful love to Thee, all bounteous Power,
Whose smiles around us shine.

Teach it, in trusting prayer
To turn to thy bright world, — when call'd to know
With what deep trembling, love must dwell below,—
Earth's partings come not there.

What though the cloud by day
Darken our footsteps on the homeward road;
Through the dim pathway that the Saviour trode,
Thou wilt illume our way.
Did not that cloud of yore
Flame into brightness when the night drew nigh?
Still beams its glory in the solemn sky,
When joy's bright hour is o'er.

Oh! Thou who hearest prayer,
Though stormy thunders shake the astonish'd deep,
Or hush'd, her star-lit waves in silence sleep,
Whose ear is open there,
Hear now thy children's cry.
On taught and teacher thy rich blessings pour;
And when their home is found on earth no more,
Bright be their place on high.

The Annual Report was then read by the Corresponding Secretary.

ANNUAL REPORT.

In the month of April last, the Directors of the Sunday School Society, caused a circular to be very extensively circulated, requesting reports from all schools, from which communications have ever been received, and from all others in different parts of our country, which are conducted by persons who feel an interest in the Society, and are disposed to aid in accomplishing its objects. The call of the Society has been answered, and sixtyone reports have been received. Of this number fiftytwo are from schools, from which reports have before been received, and having now connected with them six thousand five hundred and fiftyfive children, and one thousand one hundred and thirtyone teachers, showing an increase of five hundred and ninetyfive children and one hundred and twentyfour teachers.

Nine schools have been reported now for the first time. A school at Brattleborough, Vt. which was "formed two years since under great disadvantages, the society being poor — no books, and but two or three teachers who had ever attended a Sunday school." It is said to be in a prosperous condition, considering it has only been in existence for two summers: and great improvement has been made, and much benefit received from the school. A school which was established in Pepperell, in 1833, and "though nominally the Sabbath school of the First Parish in that town," in the language of the report, "we have considered it a duty to seek out the children of that class, (more or less numerous in every community,) who manifest no

very decided interest in any particular religious society. We are disposed to think that in so doing we may hope to effect the greatest good. The school enjoys a good degree of prosperity. During the winter months, the children are unavoidably irregular in their attendance, being scattered over a very large extent. For this reason we propose in future, to discontinue during the severest weather, the exercises of the school." Also, a school which was established at Hubbardston, in the spring of 1828, and is "more flourishing than ever before." And one in Templeton, which was established in the year 1827. "The exercises of the school are held during the intermission of the public services of the church, and are opened either by prayer by the preacher for the day, or by the singing of a hymn by the teachers and scholars, who assemble as conveniently as they can near and around the pulpit and communion table, to attend the devotional acts, and then retire to different parts of the church to recite their lessons and receive such explanations and instructions as are needed." "The mode of instruction in the school has been principally catechetical, as will appear from the books which are used, viz. Elements of Morality and Religion by Dr Channing, Catechism by Worcester Association of Ministers, Cummings's and Allen's Questions on the New Testament, and Porteus's Summary of the Evidences of Revealed Religion. Besides these, the New Testament is used by several classes, who are questioned by their teachers on the portion recited, and receive occasionally explanations of the same. And also two schools, one at Salisbury, N. H. and the other in Franklin, an adjoining town, both of which have been formed since the last anniversary of our Society, and are confined to the families attending upon Unitarian preaching. The schools were in a flourishing condition, and discontinued during the winter. Their revival this spring will probably depend much upon the success in obtaining regular preaching. "A devoted, enterprising, persevering christian spirit among the teachers, enlightened and regulated by a faithful Pastor is all that is wanted," says our correspondent, "to secure the most

gratifying improvement and success to this most useful institution," in that quarter. And a school at South Hingham, "which has just been established." The report states, that they have "sixty male and sixtyone female scholars: eleven male and seventeen female teachers, and one general superintendent. There is at present as much interest in the subject as could be wished. The teachers engaged in the business with a readiness altogether unexpected." They have teachers' meetings once a week.

A report has also been received from the Sunday school at Norton, connected with Rev. Mr Clark's Society. The school has been established twelve or fourteen years, but has never before made a communication to us. "There has been," the report states, "a growing interest in its prosperity. And it now numbers more scholars than it did six years ago, though there has been a division in the society within the last two years, and consequently a division in the Sunday school, which reduced the number of scholars."

A letter has been received, stating the success which has attended the endeavors of the Rev. Mr Doggett to establish a Sunday school at Bridgewater, in connexion with his Society. He states, that "in discharge of parochial duty, he visited personally each family in his parish, with a view of ascertaining the number of children that could be obtained, and endeavored to impress the parents with the importance of Sunday school instruction, and to acquaint himself personally and familiarly with their children. An immediate attachment was thus created between himself and the children, and they were ready and anxious to attend Sunday school, as desired, and the thought seemed to animate them with delight.

"A similar course was taken to obtain teachers. A friendly and intimate acquaintance with the young persons of his parish secured to him an influence, which enabled him to form them into a Bible class. By giving a course of familiar lectures upon scripture, and the duties of teachers, he found them qualified and engaged to commence the work of instruction. These

lectures are still continued, rendering the class more and more competent to act as teachers.

"I present you," he adds, "this statement of the recent establishment of this Sunday school, with a strong belief that the course which has been here pursued, will be generally attended in other places where such institutions have not been established, with cheering success."

A letter has been received from the gentleman, who is the present minister of the Unitarian Society in Buffalo, N. Y. "Until this spring," he says, "the Unitarian Society have not been so situated as to be able to establish a Sunday school. On my arrival here, four weeks since, I found them ready and anxious to make a beginning. Arrangements have accordingly been made, and the school will be opened on the next Sabbath. We have sent to the East for books: teachers have been selected, and some efforts have been made to gather children. There are very few children, however, in the society, and the school will be chiefly composed of those not belonging to any society, or those who do not choose to attend the Sunday schools of the societies, where they worship. It will be much upon the plan of the Howard Sunday school in Boston, and with proper efforts on the part of the teachers, may be made large. Children of poor families which do not attend church are numerous here. An association will be formed in the Unitarian Society to attend to the wants of such poor children as may be induced to come to the Sunday school, and through them a salutary influence may thus be exerted upon the parents."

The writer adds: "if the expression of the warm sympathy felt by the little devoted band here with their friends at the East in the prosperity of the cause, can give your Society any pleasure or encouragement, you are at liberty to use it as you may think proper."

The reports which have been received, with scarcely an exception, speak in the highest terms of the present condition of the schools. Every inducement is thus offered for renewed exertions to improvement. The cause, in which we are en-

gaged, is sustained by devoted persons, who are striving to improve to the uttermost the advantages of Sunday schools. The interest which has been felt in them is sustained and increasing. And if no great improvements have been made, the feelings of piety and benevolence which led to the establishment of the schools are still cherished, and if there is no cause for rejoicing, the satisfaction may be felt that the schools are means of doing much good, and as effectual now as they ever have been. The reports are encouraging and delightful — and the few extracts only which can be given, will be interesting to all.

The superintendents of one of the oldest schools write that they "have acquired by long usage, and from the lessons of experience, so regular a course, that our annual reports even to ourselves, are almost tedious repetitions, and were the labors in which we are engaged of any inferior character than that of Religion, they too might become tedious by their uniformity. But as soon will the receiving of our daily bread, the recurrence of our nightly hours of repose, and the hourly enjoyment of the domestic circle, become tedious repetitions, as will the duties of the Sabbath school to one who is thoroughly imbued with a sense of their importance, and a love of their performance."

"Although," a superintendent writes, "there has been no change in our method of instruction since we last addressed you, still it affords us great pleasure to say that our school was never so large, nor in so prosperous a condition as now. We have in the school nearly all the children of a suitable age to attend. And we feel that we have done some good, and are continuing so to do. We have but one complaint to make, and that the general one, 'want of teachers.' Soon our school will be much larger than it now is, and we fear we shall not be supplied with as many teachers as we could wish. Yet we will not repine. We believe the cause to be a holy one, and God will prosper it."

The report from another school, which had just been opened for the season states the "present condition of it to be very

encouraging. There was something delightful in seeing the children and their teachers meet. Every countenance was lighted up with beams of joy and gladness. There was a rush of the children to their places, which testified their eagerness again to engage in the pleasing employment. There are no 'changes and improvements,' that I can put on paper; and yet there are many; but they lie in the increased energy, fidelity and zeal of the teachers, and the cheerfulness, docility and perseverance of the children."

Another report states the present condition of the school to be "very flourishing and useful:" the number of scholars one hundred and twentynine, and that of teachers nineteen. The town, in which it is situated, (Bernardston, Mass.) the report states, "contains a population of nine hundred and fortyfive — and has four religious societies. Two of which, besides ours, have Sabbath schools. But, probably, both of the other schools do not contain more than one half as many as ours. The children are happy in attending the school — and we hope and believe are made better." The report from that school is made from the report to their own Sabbath school society the first Thursday of November last. At that time it was discontinued for the winter, and has now just commenced for this season. It is thought by the teachers of that school to be "decidedly the best way to have a regular examination and close, and commence again in the spring."

From a clergyman, deeply interested in the cause, we have the following account of the school, connected with his Society. He writes that "the school has been held throughout the winter, the teachers' meetings regularly once a week, at which I have presided and expounded the lesson. There is more interest among the girls than among the boys, which I suppose is owing to a deficiency of male teachers, and an idea that boys of ten, twelve, and fourteen are too old to go to Sunday school. The attendance during the year has been generally good, regular and punctual. Still the interest felt by all concerned in the school has not been what it ought, what in other places I

suppose it is. The fact with us is, that those who go on the principle of doing habitually no good to others, do not, of course, feel an interest in the Sunday school; while those who do go on the principle of living for others are looking out for other ways than the very humble one here presented. The Sunday school, therefore, is neglected. 'Why, any one can teach children to be good; such an one, and such an one will make excellent instructors.' Among the means of blessing man, the Sunday school is one of the least thought of, and they, it is believed, are the persons to engage in it, whom we should select in other enterprises of doing good. The most important change we have made in our mode of instruction is studying the book of Acts in this manner: a portion, say thirty verses, is given out for a lesson for all classes sufficiently advanced. The lesson is first critically examined at the teachers' meeting, then reviewed in a general conversation upon it, for the purpose of singling out the moral and religious points it presents, and these are illustrated, brought together, and numbered. The lessons are then taught to the classes. We think this a good way to study any portion of the Scriptures."

Another clergyman writes to us, that the school in his "Society has been sustained from the beginning with a uniformly good degree of zeal and interest, both on the part of the teachers and the scholars. The only very material change which has taken place in the management of it during the past year has been, the separation of all the children under eight years old from the rest, amounting to sixtysix, and forming them into a school by themselves, in another apartment. This arrangement gives both the schools more room, and enables us to accommodate to each more successfully the general exercises and other matters. We have in both schools one hundred and twentythree girls and ninetysix boys, and thirtysix teachers."

The present condition of our school," says a superintendent, "is well indicated by the numbers which attend it. Its prosperity, under a good Providence, has been equal, if not greater,

than at any former period. Teachers and pupils are deeply interested in the objects and success of it. Our system having been previously well matured, no changes of consequence have been made; and the only improvement of which we can make any report, is the more rigorous application of our established rules, and a greater efficiency in teaching, acquired by experience and attendance on our teachers' meetings. The latter have been uniform, well attended, and conducted in a manner and with a spirit, such as to impart new interest to the Sunday school teacher. During the past year the children have received instruction in singing from Mr Kingsley, in which they have been much interested, and made such progress as to increase greatly the effect of our devotional exercises."

Passing over necessarily many reports, from which it was intended to make extracts in this part of our Report, the following statements only can be given. "The condition of our school is at present highly gratifying to all its friends. The teachers are interested, and devoted to their great work. Their constant and cheerful attendance promises to secure the happiest results. The delight which the children take in all the services of the school — their prompt and punctual attendance, and the various little forms of coöperation they display with the views and endeavors of the teachers, alike afford a rich recompense of our past exertions, and a sure pledge of future success.

"It has been an object of particular care with us to foster such interest on the part of the children, assured as we were of its essential importance. The good fortune that has crowned our labors in this respect urges us most strongly to continue and extend them.

"No great changes have taken place in our school the last year. In compliance with the wishes of the teachers, a regular course of study has been adopted for all the classes, and the use of manuals very fully adopted. The design of this measure was to give a degree of regularity and progression to the whole course of instruction, that could not otherwise be secured The

manuals are kept as much as possible to the teachers, serving in their hands rather as guides to themselves than as lesson books to the children. To impart instruction by means of conversation is pursued as strictly as the means and circumstances of each teacher will admit. We have had reason thus far to think favorably of the system adopted. The greatest obstacle we have to contend with is the want of suitable manuals. We know of no object more deserving the attention of the Christian scholar and philanthropist, than the composition of simple, appropriate, attractive, and useful reading and text books for our children and our classes.

"Our children have continued to attend Mr Kingsley's singing school the past year. We are happy that in consequence they have improved not only in their music, but in other respects also. Indeed, this part of their instruction may safely be considered an important means both of increasing the numbers, and of awakening the interest of our children. We would bear full testimony to the favorable influence of the music lessons."

The report of the Howard Sunday school, which is established in this city, and designed for the children of families, which are not connected with any religious Societies, states — "the present condition of it as promising and full of encouragement. Never has there, we believe, in any period of its existence, been a greater interest manifested, on the part of both teachers and pupils, or a more faithful devotion to its interesting, yet arduous and responsible duties. The children too, generally manifest a strong attachment to the school; and often as the teacher visits their lowly abode is the gratifying remark made by the parent, 'My children need no greater punishment than to be deprived of going to your school.' In these visits the teacher uniformly meets with a welcome reception, and they have been highly instrumental in enlisting the feelings and securing the co-operation of the parents."

"The Ladies' Sewing Circle, composed of the female teachers of the school, and a few of their friends, have been untiring

in their efforts during the past year. Their friendly visits to the parents of the children — with their benefactions in supplying the latter with clothing, shoes, &c., have, we believe, been productive of much good.

"During the last six months, three Bible classes have been formed, composed of the older pupils of the school; one, of boys, under the care of one of the assistant superintendents, and two of misses. Some of them, it is hoped, will hereafter be prepared to engage with us as teachers.

"Since our last report, a religious service for the children of the school has been established, (through the assistance of Messrs Gray and Barnard, Ministers at large,) which has thus far been attended with highly gratifying results. At the close of the school, in the morning, the children remain in the Chapel, where the same course of religious services (adapted to their understanding and wants,) are performed, as in our churches, the children unite in the singing, and seldom is there a more attentive audience than is witnessed here. Children not connected with the school, and those of other schools, are attracted to this service, and in good weather, there are seldom less than one hundred and fifty, and often two hundred of these little auditors present."

The important subject, mentioned in the Circular, "What appears to be most wanting to increase the usefulness and improve the condition of the schools?" has been fully considered in the reports from which extracts will be given.

"The *great* want is unquestionably that of good, faithful, and interested teachers. I know but little of other ministers' experience; but my great difficulty is to excite and maintain a proper feeling of interest in teachers. Owing in some instances to inexperience, in others to impatience, in others to incompetence, they witness little beneficial results from their labors, and are ready to abandon them in despair. If in your Report you can suggest anything that shall tend to produce in teachers a spirit of faith and patience and fidelity, you will do good service to the cause of Sunday schools.

"Nothing is wanted to increase the usefulness, and improve the condition of the school, but able, pious and devoted teachers. My uniform experience has been, since my first acquaintance with Sunday schools, that a good teacher will make a good class. Let ministers employ all the energies of their souls to fit their teachers for the office they sustain."

"It is found with us," in the language of a clergyman, who has had much experience in Sunday schools, "as in most other places, more easy to obtain female teachers than male. We continue the meetings of the teachers once in a fortnight, and I think with increased interest and improvement. This is found to be an excellent school for qualifying the teachers for the business of instruction. Those who have been scholars make the best teachers. If we could prevail on more young men to engage heartily in this business, and to qualify themselves for teachers, so as to be able to carry forward the older classes, I am persuaded it would greatly increase the usefulness of the school."

Other reports mention the same evil, of the want of teachers; and also that of their occasional absence. And some state, that a greater interest in *parents* is most wanted.

On this subject, a writer, from whose report an extract has already been presented, remarks that "a general practical interest in the school among the first men of the parish is wanted. I mean that those who take hold of and carry forward other plans of doing good should take hold of this. They are the men of enterprise, activity, and earnestness in duty who will make any cause prosper, and the best causes cannot do much until such men are enlisted in their behalf. How has it been with the Temperance cause? What an impulse has it received since practical men have taken it up in earnest! But the first men in our parishes generally hold back from the Sunday school. They want to see it prosper, — will very affectionately inquire after it; but they do not take hold of it themselves. There are honored exceptions to this remark. But it is too true, as a gen-

eral thing, that many who are best fitted by their business and standing in society to introduce life and energy into the school, and best fitted, for the same reason, to impress upon children the conviction that religion is a high, practical, and all-important interest, keep away from this institution. When they come into them, our schools will be very different; new interest will be infused into them, new and more extensive operations introduced, many classes of adults will then easily be formed; and to sustain and direct the interests of a school, where many, from childhood even to advanced age, are taught the history, evidences, truths, and claims of our religion, is this a work beneath the attention of the first laymen of our land?"

Closely connected with the foregoing subjects are the evils mentioned in the Society's Circular, that Sunday schools are not esteemed even as they deserve to be: that the system itself, the object or end of Sunday school instruction, does not command that deep and solemn interest which its nature requires. And also, the inquiry how those evils can be remedied, and what can be done to interest parents and teachers, and the community generally, more deeply in Sunday schools.

The reports from the schools contain many views in relation to the above subjects; and the following extracts are interesting and important, and contain many valuable suggestions.

A correspondent writes, that the question, as to the remedy for these evils "may admit of different answers; but I dare not undertake to give them. I will merely say what I think has had much influence in changing the face and condition of our's. To the meetings of my Bible class, which contains my Sunday school teachers, I invited the upper classes of the school. I also urged and obtained the attendance of many parents; and in my short lectures, which, through the Divine blessing, became so interesting as to attract large numbers, I, as clearly as I could, in a most familiar style and manner, showed the influence of *early* Bible, religious, and moral instruction, not merely in view of eternity, but especially as citizens of the

community, as nurseries of church and state. That the very existence of the society, as a parish, must depend in a short time, under God, on the influence of knowledge, and the principles here advanced, and inculcated on the minds of the young. The effects have been visible and good."

Another correspondent admits fully the evils mentioned in the Circular, and adds, that he "knows of no other way of remedying them, than that the *warm* friends of Sunday schools should use all reasonable methods of inciting in the public mind a deeper interest in the subject. But how? In the same way as an interest is incited in or upon other subjects, viz. by conversing frequently with parents, guardians, teachers, &c., or by writing and preaching upon the subject, or by circulating such books as are suited to awaken a lively interest in this important concern."

In another report the writer states, that the evils in question "can be remedied only by causing parents and teachers and the community generally, to become more religious, more sensible of the importance of piety and moral virtue, and by exhibiting before them some of the good fruits, the happy results of Sunday school instruction. When parents can be made to feel that religion is important to them and their children, and the community to realize that the prevalence of moral and religious sentiments contribute to their security and happiness, and to believe and know that Sunday schools are nurseries of piety and virtue; then will they feel a deeper interest in them, and give them their hearty support and encouragement."

A correspondent, from whom we have taken so much in this Report, recommends "a division of the year into terms, allowing between them vacations, and having an annual celebration, with reports of the progress of the school, and a public address. Interest in the best school will at times decrease; it may be well to give indifference a time to expend itself, and then fresh interest will set in like a new current, at the commencement of a new term. Those who feel the most

interested in their week studies look forward with great pleasure to a vacation, and it seems to me something of the same reason may apply to a vacation in the Sunday school. At least, by presenting distinct periods of time successively to the mind, it will strengthen motives to diligence and effort. It will be attended with the best results, to have an interesting opportunity of bringing the claims of the Sunday school each year distinctly before the parish, and the annual reports will be records of past experience, to guide and quicken the operations for the future. I am now *theorizing;* for we have not yet tried the above plan, but some of us have much thought of it, and I give you a few hints of our impressions."

The same writer also recommends "more prayer in our schools, and for the schools. Do we believe that the Divine Teacher ever said, that the Father is more ready to give his spirit to them who ask for it, than earthly parents are to give good things to their children? If so, ought we to restrain prayer? We shall not work aright, till we feel more than we do that we are workers together with God; and it may be that God will withhold from us the fruits, because that when we inquire anxiously how we shall plant, and how we shall water, we do not look up to Him for the increase."

The importance of interesting parents more deeply in Sunday schools is strongly urged in some of the reports, and means of doing it are suggested. One, "upon which," the superintendents of a school state, they "have practised with some success, and are trying to make more efficient — that is, to enlist parents more extensively in our service, as *teachers*. We endeavor to prevail upon such as have right views of parental obligations, to remember their duties to those unfortunate children who have not the advantages of their own — to bring their own little ones with them to the school-room, and to unite with them *under their own eye*, in the same class, children who are poor and ignorant. What father is there, who cannot do this, and yet be entirely faithful to his own peculiar charge?"

"As a means to interest teachers in this all-important subject," a superintendent writes, "we recommend frequent meetings for the mutual interchange of opinions, and improvemen. in a knowledge of the sacred volume. To interest parents, we recommend that teachers should visit the families of those children, which they have in their charge, and the earnest endeavors on their part to induce them to visit the school in return."

"It appears to us," in the language of a report from which we have already largely drawn, "that 'what is most wanting to improve the condition of our school,' and all others of which we have any knowledge, is to have some method devised, by which the instructions of these schools may be rendered so attractive and so abundant, that our youths may not only be taught in them the very alphabet of religious knowledge, but be carried forward to such attainments as will send them forth into mature life, thoroughly furnished with such knowledge of the evidences, and of the nature and design of Christianity, and such well defined conceptions of its practical worth and importance, as will not only render them invulnerable to the poisoned shafts of infidelity, but as will prepare them to take their place in society as the supporters and ornaments of the Christian faith and practice.

"To effect this, we think men of high intellectual powers and extensive means of preparation for the duty, must be induced to examine the nature and importance of these institutions, so that they will give them their aid. Methods must be devised to induce the pupils to remain in some way connected with these schools until their minds are sufficiently advanced to receive the higher instructions which may be prepared for them. We think something of this may be effected, by having classes separated from the mass of the school, to whom exercises may be assigned, and lectures delivered — rising in order as may be required. These exercises and lectures must be equally removed from the common lessons of the early school, and from the distinct and elaborate character of the discourses of the

pulpit; so as to call out the *individual* exertions of every pupil."

A superintendent, much interested in Sunday schools, and of high standing in the community, thus writes: "What is most wanted is a deeper sense of the importance of a Sunday school, on the part of the Society, generally. The Sunday school ought to be considered as a necessary part of the Society, and that no Parish is really flourishing, and in the condition its friends would desire it to be, in which there is not a Sunday school, which all the children attend. It is asked, 'How can these evils be remedied?' It is a subject on which I have reflected considerably, from time to time. I know no other way than by those who know and feel the value of this institution saying so, on all proper occasions, and shewing their sincerity by their conduct. Let the children see that they take a deep interest in the school. Let parents see it. Let the public opinion in the Parish (if I may so express it,) be affected, as public opinion must always be, by having the subject frequently presented for reading and conversation. An occasional public meeting may be useful — though I have doubted as to the good effects of parading children. The minister should introduce the subject in his pastoral visits, and occasionally in a more formal way, in the pulpit. I am persuaded, that it is only necessary for people to think on the subject — to take the trouble to examine it, and they will feel (that is, all who feel an interest in any religious subject or institution,) an interest in Sunday schools."

One who has had much experience as a Sunday school teacher says, that "our annual meetings should be conducted with greater spirit; our influential and talented men express their interest in the cause more fully and freely; — Sunday school Anniversaries should be multiplied, and held by every school, and made occasions of local, if not of public excitement; and we should improve every befitting opportunity to press home upon the public ear the vast and universal importance of a religious education to the present and eternal happiness of our children, the safety and prosperity of our common country, and the highest welfare of unborn generations."

Another report contains these valuable remarks. "For the higher classes we need very much a work adapted to their capacities on Christianity, giving them some more definite and connected conceptions of the nature of its record, of its evidences, and of its doctrines. The feeling of this want, I have no doubt, will before long lead to its being supplied in an acceptable manner.

"I am," he adds, "more and more convinced that a class should be formed out of the more serious and intelligent children, on their leaving the Sunday school, to be educated systematically for one year or more, by the clergyman, in order to their being fitted to become teachers. It would call for some time and attention on the minister's part: but they could not be more agreeably or usefully bestowed. I believe that in most Societies a class of this description of from eight to a dozen, might easily be collected."

A superintendent thus writes. "A sentiment like the following, in relation to religious instruction would have its advantages in all Sabbath schools, viz: — Age is not the christian test for perfection and happiness. The man of eighty and the child of eight should in humility sit at the feet of the Saviour for lessons of virtue. A false pride, in relation to age or youth that should attend the instructions of a Sabbath school, has, we fear, deprived us of the services and influence of some, when they themselves, as well as the instruction given, have appeared the most interesting and important. The time is not far distant, we trust, when we shall feel that education and religion are not to be marked out as something gained, or to be laid by, as convenience, interest, custom and pride dictate, but rather the solemn work of a life."

From another experienced teacher we have the following remarks: "Perhaps, if the community could be informed specifically, of the advantages derived from Sunday school instruction, illustrated by instances of reformation, improvement of character, of mind, and heart, reported from actual observation, a greater interest would be felt in promoting the growth of these

schools. To do this, a periodical seems the most ready and obvious agent. If a suitable editor could be found for the object, it would, I think, meet with encouragement. This, then, might influence the community generally, and consequently parents along with others.

"As to teachers, it seems to me, they are to be moved by the consideration of their solemn responsibilities. Having undertaken a work of such inexpressible moment to the immortal beings under their charge, the question of how they teach should be urged home upon their consciences. If they do not feel some degree of accountability for the religious progress of their precious charge, they ought to abandon the work; and if they persevere, they should spare no efforts to make the most of the few or many talents they possess, to carry their children onward toward the goal of Heaven. This labor should be undertaken from choice, and from a conviction of duty, and it will hardly fail to be interesting to the teacher — and in proportion as the teacher is interested, will the child ever be."

The following extracts are from the report of a school, which has been and is very successfully conducted, and made by its superintendents, who have had great experience. "Amidst the success that crowns, in various ways, the progress of our school, we are persuaded that both our own usefulness and interest, and those of our fellow teachers in other schools, might be greatly promoted, were there a closer union and stricter sympathy between the several schools. Were all the schools to communicate, and connect themselves with each other, we feel confident that the happiest effects would be secured. General meetings of all the teachers of this city, for instance, might be held from time to time, for discussion and deliberation. Courses of lectures might be given before the whole body. Such measures, and indeed even the mere meeting together of those who, like the teachers of our Sunday schools, fired with a kindred spirit are pursuing the same great end, could not fail to usher in a new era, and bring about that general and deep interest,

which we all need. Communication between the several schools of the city and country might also be promoted either by having new publications established, or by having those already in circulation greatly improved. If the cause of Sabbath schools deserves the rank that we, and other teachers, are disposed to give it, why is the Unitarian press so silent upon the subject? We are glad to know that the schools of other denominations are reaping great benefit from the constant and wide spread influence that is emanating from their presses, carrying every measure and happy thought from one part of the Union to every other, enlightening and cheering the labors and heart of the Sunday school teacher, in the farthest North, or the remotest West, with the experience and views and hopes of all his fellow laborers. It is true our circle is by no means so widely extended, as that of the schools of the other sects; but this, we are sure, is no reason why it should not be pervaded to its utmost extent with as free, as warm, as beneficial an influence."

It is stated in one of the reports, that "the interest of parents in the parish has been much increased by the formation of a Sunday school Association, of which any person may be a member by paying a small stipulated sum annually. This gives us funds, and an occasional address before this Association gives spirit and energy to our efforts."

Another report speaks of "Anniversary meetings of the scholars and teachers, belonging to all the Sunday schools of Liberal Christians in the vicinity, at which parents should attend, and addresses should be made by the superintendents and teachers, as well as the minister. This would undoubtedly rouse attention and increase the interest, both of parents and teachers in the subject. Few parents, it is presumed, would witness such a spectacle with indifference. Sermons occasionally on the subject would also have a good effect."

"We want," says a deeply interested superintendent, "more union — more sympathy — more coöperation with other schools — we want social meetings of teachers, where parents also may be invited, that their interest and aid may be secured, and

where the hearts of *all* may be warmed — and the minds of *all* enlightened, in a better understanding of their duties."

In another report, it is stated "that if a school is not sufficiently known to the religious society with which it is connected, it might be expedient to celebrate the anniversary of such school for once at least, by a meeting of the children, with their parents, friends and teachers, at which meeting an address shall be delivered, suited at once to impress the minds of the children, and to set forth the claims of the institution to the regard of parents, and the importance of a hearty coöperation on their part, with those who to some extent at least, have in charge that most important work, the religious education of their children. In this, however, too much publicity and all unnecessary parade should, in our opinion, be avoided. We would recommend, too, that teachers should visit the children under their care, and invite them to return their visits, whatever may be their rank in life; in short to court their society, to endeavor to make a personal friend of each member of their class, so that, when the interesting connexion which now exists between them shall be dissolved, the teacher shall exert an influence for good, over the pupil, which shall only cease with life."

The superintendents of a school write, "that so far as our observation extends, a removal of unreasonable doubts still existing in the minds of some parents respecting the expediency and utility of a Sabbath school, which would excite in them a greater interest in the institution, and an engagedness on the part of teachers which would prompt them to acquire the necessary qualifications for giving instruction, would essentially increase the usefulness, and improve the condition of every Sabbath school."

One much interested in the cause, thus writes: "I believe the success of all schools, and of the great objects intended to be accomplished, can be effected only by a zealous, devoted and faithful discharge of the responsible duties of a teacher; it will be found that where these qualities are deficient to any consid-

erable extent, it will be felt and seen, in the irregular attendance, listless indifference and want of order in the hours of school. I would not unduly magnify the importance, or propose conditions unattainable, by the faithful teacher in a Sunday school, lest many should exclaim "who is sufficient for these things," and turn with discouragement away. But I do believe, that the importance of this system is not felt and appreciated, as it ought to be: for what is his office? While it is of all others the most delightful, and pleasing to a lover of Christ, and Christianity, it is withal the most important in its effects on individual character, and the soul's immortal hopes and welfare. To him is committed the infant mind, as yet not fully exposed to the world's seductive snares, and which in all probability will receive its good or evil bias from his faithful or unfaithful discharge of duty. A responsibility, therefore, rests upon teachers not less important than upon him who is set apart to the high and holy calling of a public teacher of the gospel. They should so feel and engage in the cause with a firm faith and trust, that the good seed, thus early sown, will spring up and bear fruit to the praise and glory of God.

In the circular of this year, a question was proposed as to the propriety of making the Evidences of Christianity a part of a course of Sunday school instruction. It was thought desirable to obtain the views of those engaged in conducting Sunday schools upon that subject; and also to learn in what instances, in what manner, and with what success the evidences of our religion had been taught in any of the schools. One question was in these words: "Ought the evidences of Christianity to form a part of a course of Sunday school instruction, as well to resist the progress of infidelity, as to impress children more fully with the *truths* of Christianity?" The objects are distinct, and both thought to be important. The latter is highly so, for the chief book used in all schools and the only one in some, is the Bible: this with us is almost the first book to be placed in the hands of a child — it is introduced into the schools with

other books for amusement and instruction. Should nothing be done to distinguish the Bible from other books; to set forth in Sunday schools the authenticity and credibility of the Scriptures; to show that they are entitled to the importance given them, that they are the word of God, and the record of his revealed will to men?

Very full answers have been received to those questions, and as full extracts will be made as the limits of this Report will allow. By the answers which have been received, it seems that the Evidences of Christianity have been taught in some schools, and with success — and that much more would have been accomplished, if suitable books could have been found.

In the report from the well known and long established school at Portsmouth, N. H., it is stated that in that school, "there has always been one or more classes engaged in such studies — but although more favored perhaps than many other schools, we have had but one HAVEN to lead on such classes, and to attract them around him beyond the age, when the *young man* begins to feel that he is among *children*."

A gentleman of great experience writes that he has "had the care of the most advanced class of females for nearly two years, and we have gone through a course of instruction on the Evidences of Christianity, and I think with very great advantage. I believe all the members of the class can give a reason for the faith that is in them, and that these studies have more fully impressed them with the truths of Christianity. The usefulness of attending to a course upon the evidences will depend very much on the character of the pupils and the success of previous instruction. It is very important, also, that it should not be a mere dry recitation of tasks, but that the teacher should be well acquainted with the subject and deeply impressed himself with the importance of it, that he may add interest to the exercises by conversation. The class have gone through Porteus' Evidences — Paley's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion — and some smaller treatises, such as Littleton's beau-

tiful essay on the conversion of St Paul. I am sure it has been gratifying and useful to the teacher, and I think it has been so to the pupils. They began with the subject of natural religion — Nichols' and Paley's.

"I think, however, that a better work for the purpose than any one I am acqainted with might be prepared and is much wanted."

From other schools we learn that the "evidences have only been taught incidentally;" that "attention has been called to them by brief and simple lectures by the pastor, which have benefitted the higher classes in the Sabbath school;" that "teachers have given some general instruction in them without the aid of manuals — and enough has been done in that way to show the importance of pursuing the subject much further." In one school "it has been the habit of some of the teachers, according to their choice, to make the Evidences of Christianity an object of constant attention in their classes. Indeed," the report proceeds, "one can hardly refrain from it, even if disposed, with the Bible for a text book. No book of the evidences, adapted to the minds of children, has come to our knowledge; and yet, it would seem, that the less abstruse and speculative, which, after all, are the most convincing and substantial evidences of Christianity, might be made plain and intelligible even to the minds of children. We cannot resist an expression of surprise that such a book has not been prepared."

A large number of reports has been received, in which an opinion in favor of making the evidences a part of a course of Sunday school instruction is expressed. In many of them it is stated that they would have been taught in the schools, if suitable books could be obtained. A few extracts only can be given, expressing the views of those, who are in favor of introducing such a course of instruction.

"This subject (Evidences) has never formed a part of our Sunday school instruction from the fact that there are no works to my knowledge, simplified and adapted for the purpose; but I think in this age of skepticism and infidelity, so unblushingly

avowed and advocated in the public journals, it would be desirable to introduce the study in the higher or more advanced classes if a suitable work could be furnished: at present, I know of no work so good as Paley's, and that requires much thought and close investigation to follow connectedly his course of reasoning, and could it be simplified and made easy, on the plan of Gallaudet's book on the Soul, it would form an important part of Sunday school instruction."

"It has already appeared to you," in the language of another report, "from the books used in our school, that we consider some attention to the Evidences of Christianity by the Sunday school scholar as highly important. It is of special importance at the present day. And it is a matter of deep regret, as well as utter astonishment, that the different sects and denominations of Christians should employ so much of their zeal in teaching and disseminating the peculiar articles of their creed, and at the same time neglect to furnish their children with the evidences of the divine origin and truth of the Christian Scriptures, with the arguments, the necessary weapons, by which they may be able to defend the common charter of their privileges and dearest hopes against the attacks of their common foe."

Another report states, that "the Evidences of Christianity form no direct part of our present course of instruction. The question, however, has been earnestly and fully discussed at some of our teachers' meetings; and the result seems to have been, that previous to the age of twelve, the simple truths of Christianity, impressed upon the heart, are the best evidences which can be presented to the young mind. But after that period, it was deemed an essential part of our duty to teach the Evidences, as such. The book prepared by Miss Maria Hack, entitled "Familiar Illustrations of the principal Evidences," is not sufficiently simple and interesting, though by far the best book now before the public, for use in schools. The subject is one of growing importance. It is becoming more and more necessary to erect the barrier, or the

swelling wave of infidelity will sweep over the minds of our children and leave them in doubt or despair."

"We think," says a superintendent, "that the Evidences should be a part of the course of instruction in our older classes. We have had boys connected with our school, who have even shown their skepticism, by arguments on this subject. We *know*, that they are often exposed to the withering, soul-destroying doctrines of infidelity, so notoriously taught in our city."

Another superintendent writes that "a book on the Evidences of Christianity, so far as our knowledge extends, properly adapted to Sunday schools, is a *desideratum*. Such a work should be brief, simple and conclusive, and should consist of two parts, one on the *external*, and the other on the *internal* evidences. We further think, that a work on Natural Religion, designed to precede the former, would also be very important as a branch of Sunday school instruction."

While so many friends of Sunday schools and experienced persons are in favor of introducing the Evidences, there are others equally warm and devoted friends of the cause, who think it will not be promoted by the study of the Evidences, and some think it should be introduced incidentally only.

An experienced guide in Sunday school teaching, and one who has contributed largely to its improvement, doubts "whether it would be expedient in most places at least, to introduce the study of the Evidences of Christianity into Sunday schools. I may be mistaken," he adds, "but I should fear that it would unsettle as many minds, as it would establish. I should think the best preservative against infidelity would be *an intimate acquaintance with the life and precepts of Jesus, and the teachings of the Apostles.* I am more confirmed in my faith, by perusing such a work as Ware's Life of the Saviour, or the Life and Travels of Saint Paul, than by any labored defence of Christianity I have ever read. For most persons, the wiser course, as it seems to me, will be to study Christianity itself, in

doing which they can hardly fail of acquiring a true, a strong and a rational faith."

A correspondent states it as his opinion, and that of those whom he represents, "that a Manual on the Evidences is not desirable, that as a distinct study it can hardly be made to interest children." Another thinks, "there might be danger to be apprehended from a work, which having for its special object to refute infidel opinions should present to the minds of children more of those opinions than would otherwise meet their view, because they could not be expected fully to appreciate the arguments opposed to them, or to understand precisely the mental process by which the teacher arrives at the truth. Moreover, the child is not uniformly inclined to give that strict attention which the nature of the subject requires, in order that it may be fully understood. The doubt is understood without mental effort, but the reasoning which removes it is not." In the language of another, "the evidence for our religion, best adapted to the subject, and really the most strong in its nature, and the best fitted for the comprehension of children is, that which comes in *incidentally*, in an honest and serious reading of the Bible, and a faithful application of its truth."

Another correspondent has "strong doubts whether any book on the Evidences would be of service in a Sunday school. *Children take it for granted* that the Evidences are conclusive, and I am not sure that it would be prudent to point out to them the doubts which great minds have suggested, for the pleasure of pointing out to them the answers which other great minds have recorded. I am not sure that it is not best to lead them from disputed ground to point out to them their duty to themselves and to others, to shew them how good is God; to teach them to love him in his works; to explain to them the perfect character of his Son; to make them familiar with the recorded acts of his life and of the lives of some of those who were his friends, and who were set apart by him as the common friends of man. And when in after life the infidel may speak of doubt,

and place his finger upon this or that disputed fact and questioned miracle, is it not probable, that his words will fall harmlessly upon that ear, into which the earth, and the sea, and the sky have whispered of Heaven and of God?"

A clergyman writes that it appears to him "very doubtful, whether the Evidences could be studied with advantage, at least under that name. Yet a foundation might be laid in Sunday schools, which might be of use at a later period. I should think it better to instruct children in *Ecclesiastical History*, than in the *Evidences of Christianity*. The history of the church is as capable of being made intelligible and interesting to children, as any other history."

The Directors of the Sunday School Society will, in conclusion, express their thanks for the very full and satisfactory reports which have been received, in answer to their Circular. And it affords them great pleasure to be able to present at this meeting, the views and opinions of so many interested and experienced guides in Sunday school teaching. And in the language of one of the Reports, the Directors will say that "we have much to encourage us in this great and good work; parents are awakening to a greater interest, the sympathy of the good and virtuous is with us, but above all we have the assurance of Him whose word can never fail, that we shall assuredly 'reap if we faint not'."

In behalf of the Directors of the Sunday School Society.

EDWARD BLAKE,

Corresponding Secretary.

Boston, May 28, 1834.

ADDRESSES.

Mr Charles F. Barnard rose to move the acceptance of the Report.

He was rejoiced to listen to its contents. He was glad to hear his own experience in Sunday schools so fully confirmed, in the interest and success that seemed everywhere to attend the great and good cause. He would trespass upon the patience of the meeting with a few remarks.

It is good, sir, for us to assemble together from time to time, that we may confirm each other, and induce new friends to join us, by expressing the delight we are taking in the great object of our wishes and labors. Let us say, then, how happy — how happy we are in the discharge of our duties as Sunday school teachers. It was a blessed thought that led Robert Raikes to collect the poor and neglected children of his town on the Sabbath — that they might then receive the instruction which no other day afforded them. It was a blessed thought that led our own country to adopt the Sabbath school of England. And it will be happiest of all, should the future zeal and devotion of those engaged in them, raise these schools to the highest rank among the institutions of our republic.

Over one of the buildings, that welcomes children to its care, at Hofwyl, is written, "The hope of their country." This motto I would inscribe upon the Sunday schools of our land. The advance — the safety — the prosperity, peace and glory

of our country rest with these institutions. We are just beginning to perceive our duties and responsibilities as Christians, philanthropists, and patriots. We are awakening to the truth that if we would have "the actors on life's busy scene," as good, as true, as devoted as their own peace and usefulness require, we must watch over them and direct them aright in their tender years. The improvement of the man can result only from the care and guidance that are given to the child. Early in life, in the freshness and purity of their youth, as they have just come from the hands of their Heavenly Father, let our children be sought after, and taught to avoid all sin, if we would prepare them for the life that in this world awaits the children of God.

And here, sir, let me return again to the pleasure with which I have listened to the report, to the joy which Sunday school teachers should feel and be ready to communicate in the discharge of their high duties. We wish others to rejoice as we do. The doors of our schools are thronged with children — should our exertions be continued and carried a little further, we shall be overrun with applicants for Sabbath school instruction. We need more teachers. Pressed by this want, and inspired by the delights our own bosoms are taught to feel, we would call upon all to share our labors and our joy. We would ask the young merchants, the young lawyers, the young physician, the young clergyman, the young men and women, the philanthropists and lovers of their race, to take part with us in our holy and happy work. We shall require your assistance only a few years — remain with us in the field a short time, and you may then leave it; for it will be covered with the young armed warriors whom your endeavors have helped us equip. There will be full numbers then to take your places. Instead of the fifty teachers, whose list is now kept full with difficulty, there will be the two hundred children, ready and willing to become the religious guides and teachers of other generations. The present schools will send forth new and numberless laborers to the work.

They will be the central points of wide spread influence. Like a mother country they will send forth their colonies, and plant on every side new schools wherever there are children to need them. Such is the work that asks for your support — and such the prospect it offers for the future, should it be upheld. It is in a cause like this that a teacher may well find a pleasure and delight unknown elsewhere. We may believe him when he tells us that nothing would induce him to neglect or forego the duties that await him each Sabbath with his class.

Let me close with adverting still more closely to the prospects that are opening through our Sabbath schools. We have already seen much accomplished. But much more remains unrealized as yet. We meet with our children each Sabbath on the highest and holiest ground we or they can occupy. We meet to hold converse with them on the great interests of humanity — to help them unfold the best and noblest sentiments of their nature, and to train them for those glorious ends and interests for which life was given. To teach them the will of God, and help them to obey it — to convey to them the words and the life of Jesus, and to bring them under the sway of his Gospel, is the endeavor of the Sunday school teacher with his little flock. The work is too good, too great, too much a work of God and of Heaven to be confined to one day in the week; it should be the occupation of every day. We should meet our fellow beings everywhere and always as we meet our children on the Sabbath. Let us hope then that the success of these schools is the dawn of a new era for the world — ushering in, as the morn, that great and glorious day, when man shall look upon man in the light of heaven, when we shall mingle with each other in such intercourse as Jesus held with his disciples, when the great truths of our nature and our faith shall guide and govern our dealings with each other, when brother's heart shall be knit to brother's heart in doing the will of God, when men shall be in truth the children of the Heavenly Father, and

the garden of the Lord open once more to the light of the sun that visits our world.

I would move, sir, most cordially, the acceptance of the Report.

Rev. Professor Ware, Jr. of Cambridge, then rose under a manifestation of strong interest and feeling, and said, that although he might break in upon the arrangements of the evening, the Report was too good to be passed over without discussion; and I am happy, said he, in being present to express my satisfaction in the full and cheering prospect it presents. I am happy to hear that this good cause is in so prosperous a state; and that the zeal and fidelity which has been carried into this work is none diminished, but is now in its full strength, prosecuting its great work not only in this city, but the whole country around us. I want to say to the merchant as well as to the minister of the gospel, that this is a happy work, and one well worth engaging his attention — one that will improve himself as well as the children who may be placed under his care. I know, said he, a merchant in the principal town of a neighboring State, in one of the oldest and best schools referred to in your Report, who has been eighteen years engaged in it as a teacher, who told me it would be the last duty he could relinquish, as it was the one most dear to his heart. I would urge the young man to come, in whatever profession or situation of life he may be, and if he has not a calloused heart, he will be warmed into piety and sympathy with those about him; — he will become engaged and devoted to the cause, and will have the pleasure of seeing his most sanguine expectations realized.

He seconded the Report; which was then unanimously accepted.

Dr Flagg from the chair then remarked,

The regular business of the Society being closed by the acceptance of the Report which has just been read, the meeting will now be open for the remarks of those members or friends of the Society who may be disposed to address us at this time.

The objects of the meeting are generally understood, having been set forth in the Society's circular. The result of the efforts of the Society has been stated in its several annual reports. By them it will be seen — nay, it will no doubt by most of us be remembered, that when this Society issued its first circular in 1827, only seven years ago, that beyond our city, we might look almost in vain for a Sunday school among the numerous Unitarian churches of our land. It would now be almost in vain for us to point to one of them in which there is not such a school in successful operation.

We have seen with joy and thankfulness, the good effects of these schools on the children. We have witnessed with surprise the happy influence they have had on many young persons who have entered them as teachers; undertaking the work with but little preparation, but bringing to it hearts warm with the desire to do some good, and minds bent on educating themselves for the duty they had undertaken to perform. They have done for themselves more than could have been anticipated. They have in this received a glorious reward for their labors.

We have viewed with deep interest the blessed effects of Sunday school teaching on the children of the poor, where suitable exertions have been made to bring them under its influence; and in relation to this object we have very much to expect from Sunday schools. The poor are an important class among us. We all feel their influence on society as a blessing, when they are virtuous and industrious, and almost as a curse, when vice and poverty are found united in this portion of the community. To our Sunday schools then are we to look for protection and assistance, which nothing else will afford.

In our public primary schools, children are indeed taught to *read*, to *write*, and to *count*, and by this a door is opened to them for future advancement in knowledge and usefulness in relation to the common concerns of life; but in the Sunday school, they are led to *feel*, to *think* and to *act* concerning things which involve their present and eternal peace and happiness.

They are led to know and respect themselves and their fellow beings. To know and to obey the laws of their Father in Heaven.

With these views and feelings the members of this Society have assembled here this evening to celebrate its anniversary. They gratefully remember and acknowledge, that much, very much, of the good which has flowed from these meetings has been in consequence of the information which has been imparted, the sympathy which has been expressed, and the encouragement which has been held forth, by those who have addressed us on former occasions. And they feel sure therefore that the time has not yet arrived when this public annual meeting should be laid aside, for they are confident that while continued efforts are required to promote the advancement of the cause, it is of the utmost importance that those feelings should be raised and kept alive, by which alone we shall be prompted to prosecute this great and blessed work.

The Society now wait for such resolutions and observations as shall be offered in furtherance of the objects of this meeting.

Rev. Mr Ripley, of Boston, said that he had listened to the Report of the Directors with great satisfaction, as it was a proof of the present flourishing condition of the Sunday schools connected with this Society. It was cheering to hear the statements that had been made in the Report; it was cheering to stand in the presence of an assembly like this; it was cheering to listen to the animated addresses which had been given already, and for my own part, said Mr R., after the impression made upon this audience by the Report, and by the remarks of gentlemen who have preceded me, I despair of being able to add anything to the interest of this occasion. I would rather go home now, and reflect on what we have heard, did I not feel pledged to bring forward a subject, which no friend of Sunday schools could regard with indifference.

The very prosperity of these institutions is attended with dan-

ger. We may be tempted to dwell upon what we have already done, and to forget what we yet have to do. It is true, said Mr R., as has been observed by my friend who moved the acceptance of the Report, that Sunday schools are yet in their spring-time, and this circumstance we ought always to bear in mind. It is the spring-time of Sunday schools; we have not only cast the seed into the earth, but we have the pleasure of seeing in this garden of our God, the trees of righteousness covered with the rich blossoms of beauty and promise, — but we do not yet see the mature and ripened fruits of harvest, — and we egregiously deceive ourselves, if we think the time for ingathering has arrived. No, Sir; we have yet much to do. Every Sunday school teacher, every friend of Sunday schools should regard them as but the beginning of a great moral experiment, and should make it his endeavor to advance them to the perfection and power to which they are destined. And how, Mr President, is this to be done? By the efforts of teachers themselves. By raising the standard of preparation, and inducing all to attain it. The views which I wish to present, said Mr R., are contained in the following Resolution.

Resolved, That the thorough preparation of teachers is indispensably necessary to the success of Sunday schools.

It was formerly very common — more than it is at present — for persons, when requested to take a class in a Sunday school, to say that they did not feel qualified, and were afraid to engage in the service. We still hear this objection sometimes made, and for one, I am not sorry to hear it, since a consciousness of deficiency is the best preparation for improvement. I would always encourage such persons to come forward. I would urge them, if they feel a sincere and hearty interest in the work, to undertake it without delay. But, Sir, when actually engaged in it, let them remember their solemn obligation to qualify themselves in the best possible manner for the responsible office which they have assumed. I do not plead for any preparation which supposes rare intellectual endowments, profound learning,

or elaborate courses of study, for such a preparation is by no means essential to the successful discharge of one's duty in the Sunday school. What is principally taught, Mr President, to the children of your charge? The Bible — and the Bible should be the great subject of the teacher's study. He should acquire a sound and thorough knowledge of it himself, before he attempts to explain it to others. He should make himself acquainted with its history, its antiquities, its local allusions, its doctrines and its moral lessons, and this he cannot do by a mere desultory and superficial inspection of its contents. It is truth, Divine truth, by which the human heart is sanctified — in children, as well as in others — and a knowledge of this truth can be acquired only by study. The teacher, then, must study the Bible in a connected and systematic manner. He must make use of the many valuable aids, which can be so easily commanded at the present day. You will remember, Mr President, in a late interesting work* — a work, indeed, which contains, in my opinion, many errors in doctrine and sentiment, but one which no teacher can read without improvement and pleasure, — several plans or outlines for the study of the Bible, which I should be glad to see generally adopted, and which I am sure no Sunday school teacher could follow, without a great increase in knowledge and facility of instruction. In pursuing a plan of this kind, he would derive important assistance from a work, which ought to be in the hands of every teacher, — Professor Robinson's edition of Calmet's Dictionary, in its largest form, from which a mass of information can be obtained with little trouble and at a moderate expense. I take great pleasure also, said Mr R., in here alluding to a little work that has just issued from the press, by a friend, whose labors in the cause of pure religion at the South were spoken of last evening, in terms of well merited commendation, — I mean the last volume of the Sunday Library, entitled "The Holy Land and its Inhabitants". I know not which most to admire in this volume — the transparent beauty of its style, or the artist-like

* Mr Abbott's "Young Christian."

skill with which a great variety of information is brought within such a small compass as to be accessible to all. I hope no teacher will be without it.

But, said Mr R., whatever importance we attach to a thorough knowledge of the Bible as a preparation for the teacher, this is not all. There is a preparation of the heart, still more important, without which all knowledge is cold and inert and useless. The teacher must be animated with a sincere and deep love for children, or he can never succeed. Truth will fall powerless from his lips unless it is warmed with the fire of hearty love. I do not mean that instinctive fondness for children, which the presence of any bright and interesting object may excite; but that strong feeling of interest and love, which is kindled by the thought that they are immortal beings, in whom the image of the Creator is to be preserved — who are to be carried forward through the snares of a tempting world, in all spiritual improvement and excellence, till they are presented faultless before the throne of God. This love for the children of his charge must be founded in the heart of the teacher, on strong religious feeling. He must cherish the spirit of Jesus Christ. He must fervently love that Divine Master, who himself gave such frequent and such touching proofs of his love for "little children," whom he suffered to come before him. It is related, that on a most interesting occasion, after the resurrection of our Lord, when he asked the faithless Apostle if he was sure that he now loved him, he received the reply, "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee;" and when the Sunday school teacher is kindled and melted with that deep love to Jesus Christ, so that he can adopt the language of the ardent Apostle, he will hear the same voice which addressed the repentant Peter, speaking in the depths of his heart, "Feed my lambs, Feed my lambs."

Sir, said Mr R., I will add but one word, and that is, to press the importance of preparation, from the fact that a great amount of youthful energy and piety and talent is devoted to this work.

We have the best materials enlisted, and we ought to make the most of them. As far as my own experience extends, the best men in our societies, the most active, discreet and influential men among us are deeply interested in this cause, and many of them personally engaged in it. They are capable of reaching a high standard, and it ought to be urged upon them. Although a high intellectual cultivation is not essential, it may be of great advantage; for, as has been said of the work of the ministry, that no knowledge, no science, no literary attainments, no intellectual gifts, that might not be made to bear on its great interests, — the same may be said of the Sunday school. The intelligence, the genius, the learning of a Fenelon would not be out of place there, and were Fenelon himself to return to earth, we may be certain that he would not disdain the humblest of these labors, in which it is our privilege to be employed.

Mr Robert C. Waterston, of Boston, submitted the following Resolution:

Resolved, That Sunday schools are of immense importance to the vicious poor, and peculiarly calculated for their good.

He presumed there were none present who would not agree with the sentiment of the resolution. All would remember that it was for this class the institution was first established — and all would acknowledge that the children of the poor were originally the peculiar objects of its care. Yet though all might feel in some degree the importance of the Sunday school to this class, he thought it was not felt enough. He thought no one had an adequate idea of the incalculable good that these schools might do to this degraded class of our citizens — and warmly expressed his joy in the usefulness of all Sabbath schools, for whatever class they were established, for the rich, as well as the poor — for those who had other means of instruction, as well as those who had none. But, said he, when we see the young growing up in the midst of vice — witnessing even in childhood scenes of intemperance and profligacy — and obliged to listen

in their very homes to the blasphemy of parents, we cannot but feel that we are peculiarly called upon to rescue them from destruction. If left to themselves, what would probably be their fate? Their condition is at the first glance bewildering to the mind. They are born in the midst of poverty — their parents have little or no principle, their earliest companions are like themselves the pale victims of want; they know nothing of that affectionate care that should ever watch over the period of childhood. Their little hands have never been clasped at a mother's knee to ask the protection of Heaven; and they have felt that even in youth their lot is unhappy and sad. As they grow older, influences more and more debasing will gather around them, and their animal natures grow more and more strong. Thus it would seem that their whole lot was governed by an unkind Providence — as if a mysterious fate had cut them off from the means of virtue, and almost compelled them to become the children of sin. But even here we may trace the infinite wisdom of God. We should remember that the whole earth is but one family, and that the same broad sky bends over all; we should remember that God has made it our duty to do good, and to love our fellow men as ourselves; and that he has made it a principle of our being that by doing so, we should increase our own virtue and our own happiness. He has given to us feelings of affection and sympathy, and he has placed these creatures of misery and sin around us, to call out these feelings into high and noble action. He has thus assigned to us a work immense and glorious. He has given us the means of rescuing these beings from ruin. Oh! glorious privilege! of saving an immortal soul from despair; of feeding a famished mind with the food of heaven; of lifting up men from the depths of sin, into the elevated paths of truth. How it should awaken our gratitude, and kindle our zeal! How it should animate our actions, and give to our whole life, an unceasing spirit of devotion! What! shall we say that they are cut off from the means of instruction, while we are able to give

it? Shall we say that they are the unavoidable victims of ignorance, while God has blessed us with the means of giving light, and made it our imperative duty to do so? No, no; we should feel that in giving us more privileges, God has doubly blessed us, in permitting us by those privileges to enlighten others; that the very duty of assisting and laboring for this class of our fellow beings, should be to us an incalculable joy. Left alone, they are dead to spiritual life, and their fate is dark and unhappy; aided and instructed, they burst away from their bondage, and look forward with Christian confidence to the joys of heaven. What a spring of action then, has God here opened to us! What treasures of spiritual wealth has he committed to our care!

All instruction given to the poor must be of great benefit; but no instruction can be compared with religious instruction, and of all religious instruction, perhaps none will be so likely to do good, as that given at the Sabbath school. For here, said he, we can take the *child;* the child, whose mind has not yet become blackened with guilt; the child, whose affections have not yet become embittered; the child, who is young, artless and happy — we take it from the abodes of vice, even while the dew of heaven is fresh upon it, and its young mind is willing to be instructed; its young soul is ready to receive light, and the image that God has stamped upon it remains clear and legible. Here, too, we can take the *youth,* who has seen more of temptation, and whose mind has already become stained — we can take him, and by kindness win him back to the purity of truth — we can teach him that the way of sin leadeth to death, and the path of the righteous to eternal life. We have also an opportunity in this way to affect the heart of the parent; first, by the books which the children take from the library, which they at times may be induced to read. And again, by the words of their children, by their questions, or their prayers, or their touching hymns. Oh, whose heart is so hard as not to be moved, while the sweet words of the Sabbath hymn are breathed

from the lips of a child? But there is still another way in which the vicious parent may be affected by the Sabbath school. It is one of the most important duties of the teacher to visit the homes of his scholars. Thus every teacher becomes as it were a Minister at Large, and is not only a teacher but a Visitor of the Poor. And who else can visit the poor, under such favorable advantages? For whom will the parent feel more respect than the teacher of his child? To whom will he feel more grateful than to his child's friend and protector? And how can religious conversation be introduced so well as by talking of the religious education of his own offspring? Thus the Sunday school can often be made an instrument of much good, even to the parent. Instances have occurred in which wonderful reformations have in this way been brought about. The instruction of the Sabbath school has been repeated at the fire-side. The music of its delightful hymns has been heard there, and the dutiful child and the repenting parent have knelt together for the blessing and forgiveness of Heaven.

I have the happy privilege, Sir, to be connected with the Bethel Sabbath school, for the children of seamen, and see daily some new proof of its happy influence. This school was commenced six months ago. The teachers at first had many difficulties to contend with, but have now, on an average, over one hundred scholars, who by their attendance and attention appear anxious to improve. At first there was but one school a day, and the attendance was irregular even at that. Now there is every morning a lecture on Natural Theology, or some other interesting religious subject — a school at noon, and after this, a regular service for children, that the scholars may hear sermons fitted to their capacities. The teachers have succeeded in gaining the affection of the pupils, who are beginning to leave bad habits and improve by their instruction.

Mr W. then made several statements, to show the happy influences the school had already exerted; and some appalling facts were mentioned to illustrate the withering and blighting effects

of infidelity upon the poorer classes of society. And it was principally here that these views were spreading, and it was here that the Sabbath school could do great good. An earnest appeal was then made to those present not yet engaged in Sunday schools.

Rev. Jason Whitman next addressed the meeting. He offered the following Resolution:

Resolved, That Sunday schools are to be regarded not as substitutes for, but as aids to parental religious instructions.

Mr W. said, that many doubted the expediency of Sunday schools, as they deemed them an interference with parental instruction. But I will not attempt to refute this argument, as it is now generally held as one of little importance. Sunday schools are like all other institutions of this nature, formed by men to bring about great and good ends; and cannot take from parents who have any regard for their children, a duty which is laid upon them by God. But Sunday schools are designed to aid the parent in his endeavors to instruct his children in the way of virtue; — and are established as a matter of expediency, to instruct those who are less favored, or left destitute of any religious instruction. Sir, there is a duty which parents owe, not only to their children, but also to the community in which they live; which is to impart to others a portion of the blessings which they themselves enjoy. They are called upon to cultivate the immortal, the spiritual, as well as the intellectual natures of their children. Parents are responsible for the religious natures of their children, inasmuch as the whole character in a degree is formed and determined in this early season of life. I would class this with the most important duties devolving on parents, to begin this instruction early, and aid it onward to better light. But, Sir, are parents as anxious about their children's spiritual natures, or do they strive as hard to make them virtuous, as to make them rich? I know they say, we want our children to be virtuous and pious; and our neigh-

bors' also virtuous and pious. But is this the language of their conduct? Do they strive to do this? Do we see them take their children to the Sunday school, and form them into classes with others and impart to them the principles of our holy religion? Sir, we see them spending many, many hours in amassing riches for their children; but how few, in implanting the pure principles of Christianity within their minds and hearts. How inconsistent and yet how common! I need not go further in the discussion of this subject, said he, as there is not one within this house who does not feel that this duty is important and should not be left undone.

Sir, parents have no right to neglect the moral instruction of their children; and should they engage in the Sunday school with that feeling and earnestness it demands, we should see their labors crowned with abundant success. They would soon become deeply interested, and it would be to them the happiest place in the world. Sir, children realize this feeling; and when their interest has once been awakened, they will not stay at home. And when the teacher has thus excited the interest of the child, the parent at home insensibly feels it, is gradually drawn to a consideration of the subject, comes at length to feel his own obligation, and will soon take delight in not only forwarding the progress of his own child, but the progress of the cause itself. Sir, we shall effect this purpose if we gain the love of the children; for it is through them that we can most effectually reach the heart of the parent. Then will heart be knit to heart, and be ready to give their aid to the great cause of Sunday schools.

But parents, it is to be feared, do not feel this duty strong enough. They are still too careless about such concerns, and the great duty which is laid upon them in this respect. Sunday schools lay the foundation of a religious character, but this must be seconded and carried out by the parents, or much of their good effect will be lost. Sir, I feel I should be false to my duty, did I not say to parents, see to your example — see that

you do not counteract the good influences of the Sunday school. These have done, and they can do much, and with the coöperation of parents will effect wonders in the community. Where vice, degradation and impurity now reign, piety and virtue will spring up. Where the voice of profanity is heard, the pure spirit of our Master will be implanted and developed. Let me say, therefore, to parents, come forth and bring your children. Engage with devotion in the cause of these schools, and they will be thronged with anxious souls eager to participate in the blessings that await them there.

Rev. H. A. Miles, of Hallowell, Me. offered the following Resolution :

Resolved, That Sunday schools are eminently calculated to awaken in teachers and pupils exertions to elevate and redeem mankind.

Mr Miles said that the resolve he had read, went to support the proposition, that Sunday schools awakened in the mind, a spirit of philanthropy, and we have evidence of this, from the facts presented us in the Report which has been read this evening. Although this institution is of recent origin among us, and has had to contend with many obstacles, yet the spirit of philanthropy had been aroused by it, of which the presence of this large assembly is ample proof. He trusted and believed that no one would go from this place, without bearing away with him some good thought, or cherished determination. It was an appointment, said he, of Providence, that no principle should come to maturity at once. That all good was progressive; and if we wished to become a virtuous people, we should first cultivate to that end the youthful mind. It is thus, said he, with devotional feelings. We must first fix our thoughts upon the subject; and then by an earnest cultivation of our spiritual natures, we shall become at length deeply and habitually devotional.

You would not propose to a youth to embark in a hazardous

enterprise without first giving him some knowledge of the end to be attained; or if you did, you could expect but little else than entire failure. But if you first instruct him in its dangers, and the precautions to be taken, he could then go on safe to the end. Sir, it would be your duty thus to educate him. Then would he engage with interest in the cause, and at the same time interest in it those around him. Sir, this applies with equal force to the institution whose anniversary we are met to celebrate. Sunday schools are eminently calculated to call forth this interest in the cause of the truth "as it is in Jesus," and to awaken feelings of philanthropy toward all mankind; to arouse the dormant spirit, and through their influence raise the poor from their miserable condition, to one of competence, respectability and piety. Sir, the Sunday school is the only institution that is well calculated to effect this change among the poor. In these, their children will be morally and religiously educated; and as it has been well remarked this evening, this instruction will not be confined to them, but will extend its influence to their parents, friends, and the whole community. Sir, bring into these schools the elder portions of society, and they cannot look upon this institution without being interested, or at least sympathising with those who are thus giving instruction to young minds dwelling in darkness. When the teacher sees what principles are to be cultivated, and how much depends on directing aright the minds and hearts of the young at this period of life, he will give his whole soul and strength to the great work. And this interest will not subside, but grow stronger and stronger. His sympathy will be awakened by it to every good cause which may claim his attention. Such feelings are naturally excited by the Sunday school, and these alone will elevate and bless mankind. Sir, I again repeat, they are calculated to fill up the measure of human benevolence. Sunday schools increase the feelings of philanthropy in proportion as they lead us to sympathise with the wants of our fellow

beings ; and these must continue to increase as long as there is a spot in our country destitute of religious instruction, and when they shall have thus conquered here all ignorance and sin, they will seek for other lands, and other worlds to conquer. Sir, in view of these institutions, we can look to the future, and almost realize the blessed influence which they are to exert. Such philanthropy as they enkindle, led a Howard to spend his time, fortune, and even life for the good of mankind ; and may we not trust that many like him will be brought forward by the Sunday school, to benefit and bless the world by their beneficent deeds.

The above is a very imperfect sketch of the remarks of Mr Miles, owing to an alarm of fire during their delivery.

Mr Miles was followed by Mr G. F. Thayer of this city, in some brief and excellent remarks on details in the modes of teaching, and books of instruction to be obtained by the Sunday school teacher.

Rev. Mr Farley, of Providence then rose, and addressed the meeting briefly, but in a very animated and feeling manner, and adapted to impress deeply on the minds of those present the valuable sentiments and suggestions advanced in the Report and by the several speakers of the evening; and to awaken in all a solemn purpose to devote their best energies to the advancement of the great and important work of Sunday school instruction.

The meeting was closed by singing the usual doxology, in which the children and the whole audience united.

A Tabular View of the Sunday Schools at the time their last Reports were received by the Corresponding Secretary.

Towns.	Children.	Teachers.	Volumes.	Date.
Amesbury,	67	14	150	1832
Andover, North Parish,	100			1830
Ashby,	151	23	300	1834
Atkinson, Me.	33	3	200	1830
Augusta, Me.	60	13	275	1832
Augusta, Geo.	28	5	150	1834
Belfast, Me.	70	14	300	do.
Brattleboro', Vt.	61	18	300	do.
Brewster, Mass.	93	12		1828
Brighton,	71	20	200	do.
Baltimore, Md.	80	15	200	1830
Brooklyn, Conn.	60	13		1834
" Second school,	35	4		do.
Bridgewater, Mass.	90			do.
Bridgewater, North,	40	8	60	1830
Bridgewater, East,	148	23	200	do.
Barnstable,	115	19	200	1834
Beverly,	50	9	124	1832
Beverly, Rev. Mr T.	205	48	200	1830
Berlin,	100	18	130	1832
Bernardston,	129	19	200	1834
Belgrade, Me.	35	4		1830
Bangor,	70	12	200	1832
Billerica,	100		150	do.
Brookline,	75	19	450	1834
Boston, Hancock Sunday School,	100	19	260	do.
" Purchase St. Sunday School,	134	24	300	do.
" Howard Sunday School,	240	36	350	do.
" Chambers St. Sunday School,	212	35	400	do.
" Chauncey Pl. Sunday School,	150	29	410	do.
" Hollis St. Sunday School,	279	55	400	do.
" South Congregational S. S.	105	16	800	do.
" New North Sunday School,	150	33	330	do.
" Brattle Street Sunday School,	132	27		do.
" Federal St. Sunday School,	130	17	214	do.
" Christian Sunday School,	70	14	90	1832
Charlestown, Mass.	219	36	700	1834
Cambridge,	140	30	425	do.
Cambridgeport,	90	18		do.
Concord, Mass.	200	24	650	do.
Concord, N. H.	88	19	370	do.
Chelmsford,	65	11	120	1829
Charlton,	30	6		do.
Charlemont,	58	7	57	1830
Cincinnati, Ohio,	50	10	300	1832
Castine, Me.	35	12	175	1830
Canton, Mass.	70	15	203	1833
Chelsea,	70	11	300	1834
Charleston, S. C.	70	3	150	do.
Dennis, Mass.	40	7	70	do.

Towns.	Children.	Teachers.	Volumes.	Date.
Dublin, N. H.	85	17	1116	1834
Dedham,	120	19	270	1830
Dover,	60	10	238	1834
Dover, N. H.	104	16	100	1830
Danvers,	50	10	290	1829
Dorchester, Rev. Dr H.	104	15	200	do.
Dorchester and Milton, Rev. Mr C.	120	14	150	1830
Deerfield,	80	13	300	do.
East Cambridge,	72	12	310	1834
Eastport, Me.	105	26	260	1833
Framingham,	100	17	260	1832
" Saxonville,	75	19	150	do.
Franklin, N. H.	60	9	100	1834
Hardwick,	60		150	1828
Hingham, Rev. Mr B.	100	20	400	1833
" Rev. Mr R.	130	23	350	1834
" (South) Rev. Mr Burton.	121	29	180	do.
Hallowell, Me.	70	15	380	do.
Hubbardston,	95	14	150	do.
Kingston, Mass.	90	12	390	do.
Kennebunk,	130	16	1000	do.
Keene, N. H.	80	17	275	do.
Lexington,	150	24	250	1832
Littleton,	114	17		do.
Lowell,	80	12	150	1833
Lynn,	112	25		1834
Lancaster,	251	39	465	do.
Louisville, Kentucky,	31	10	100	1833
Marlboro',	62	12	350	1831
Marblehead,	225	42		1832
Meadville, Pa.	45	7	100	do.
Medfield, Mass.	101	25	150	do.
Mendon,	60	12	100	do.
Newburyport,	132	27	400	1834
New York, Rev. Mr L.	104	13	170	1829
" Rev. Mr W.	50	14	150	1832
Northampton,	64	12		1834
New Bedford,	50	10	300	do.
Northfield,	185	22	224	1830
Newton, Upper Falls,	48	9	125	do.
New Salem,	68	18	137	1832
Northboro',	137	15	300	1834
Norton,	85		200	do.
Portsmouth, N. H.	249	50		do.
Portland, Me.	148	32	450	do.
Pepperell,	74	8	150	do.
Providence, R. I. Rev. Mr F.	87	24	360	do.
" Rev. Mr H.	178	34	300	do.
Plymouth, Mass.	175	25	500	do.
Philadelphia, Pa.	71	10	160	1832
Princeton, Mass.	140	20	250	1830
Provincetown,	43	6	175	1832
Roxbury, Rev. Dr G.	55	12	140	do.
" Rev. Mr P.	129	22	455	1834
" Rev. Mr W.	60	10	200	1832
Rochester, N. Y.	40	5		1829
Rowe,	50	8	70	1832

Towns.	Children.	Teachers.	Volumes.	Date.
Sterling,	257	35	533	1834
Springfield,	149	25	300	1830
Sandwich,	70	10	200	1834
Stoughton,	44	7		1829
Saco, Me.	75	19	300	1832
Salem, Rev. Mr B.	140	19	400	1834
" Rev. Mr F.	117	28	375	1832
" Rev. Mr T.	88	23		1833
Sherburne,	91	15	250	1832
Stowe,	120	20	150	do.
Salisbury, N. H.	45	6	115	1834
Templeton,	100	14	150	do.
Trenton, N. Y. (Oldenbarneveld,)	20	4		do.
Taunton,	125	14	400	1832
Waltham,	150	30	600	do.
" Rev. Mr R.	100	9	400	do.
Warwick,	120	20	270	1834
West Cambridge,	92	21	130	1829
Worcester,	120	20	300	1832
Walpole,	100	11	300	1829
Weston,	51	11	300	1834
Watertown,	81	17	160	do.
West Dedham,	50	10	200	1832
Walpole, N. H.	70	10	170	1830
Wilton, N. H.	112	26	200	1833
Washington City,	46	11	170	1830

At a meeting of the Directors of the Sunday School Society, held since the annual meeting of the Society in May last, it was voted, that the Corresponding Secretary request that reports from schools which are discontinued in the winter, be prepared and made at the close of the schools. And it was also voted, that the Articles of the Constitution of the Society in relation to membership and Auxiliary Societies be published with the Annual Report.

ARTICLE X.

" All members who are not Sunday school teachers, shall be considered as annual subscribers for the sum of one dollar. Sunday school teachers shall be considered as members of the Society, and become annual subscribers at their own option."

ARTICLE XI.

" Any association of teachers who shall vote to become auxiliary to this Society and notify the Corresponding Secretary of the same, shall be authorized to send one or more delegates to its meetings, who shall be entitled to all the privileges of membership, and shall receive the annual reports and other casual publications of the Society; and be required to furnish annually a report of the condition of the school to which they belong.

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THE

SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

5441.30

WITH

SKETCHES OF THE ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD ON THE

TWENTY-SEVENTH OF MAY, 1835.

BOSTON:
BENJAMIN H. GREENE.
1835.

TUTTLE AND WEEKS, PRINTERS.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Anniversary of this Society was held on Wednesday evening, May 27, 1835, at the Rev. Dr Channing's Church in Berry street. The church was early and well filled. The President, Rev. Dr Tuckerman, in the chair. The throne of grace was addressed in a fervent and appropriate manner, by the Rev Mr Hosmer, of Northfield. The Annual Report was then read by Edward Blake, Esq., Corresponding Secretary.

REPORT.

The Directors of the Sunday School Society, in presenting their seventh Annual Report, must first notice the loss which the Society has sustained since the last annual meeting, in the death of one of its officers, *Mr George A. Sampson.* In the month of July last, he was very suddenly taken from us, and by his death we have lost a valuable associate, the Sunday school a firm and devoted friend, and society at large, a valuable and most important member. Mr Sampson was among those who engaged in the establishment of the Hancock Sunday school of this city, which was commenced in June, 1823. He was a teacher in this school for some years, and for a time acted as its superintendent, and managed the school with great success. He was among the earliest friends of our Society and assisted in its formation; he acted as its treasurer for several years and held that office at the time of his death.

While we lament the death of Mr Sampson, it behoves us to consider his character, and make the lessons which it teaches,

efficacious. He was a merchant, and though he died young, his life was long enough to effect great purposes, and make him generally known, esteemed and respected. Engaged in active business, he never lost sight of his duty, or of the end of his being; and was in truth what he has been called, a Christian merchant. He was moral, intellectual and spiritual; and exhibited in his life the precepts and influence of the Gospel. We pay this tribute to the memory of Mr Sampson, because it is due to him, and in order that the good which he did may live after him, and all may be induced to follow his example and so live, as he did, ever prepared to die.

In furtherance of the objects of the Society, the Directors a few months ago requested the Rev. Mr Gannett to deliver a course of lectures on Christian Morals before the teachers of our Sunday schools, and such other persons as might wish to attend. He kindly responded to the call upon him, and devoted his eminent abilities to the cause, and produced an effect which will be beneficial and lasting. The interest taken in the lectures was manifested by the very large number of persons who attended, and the deep and undivided attention paid to him. A course of six lectures was thus delivered by Mr Gannett; three in Tremont hall, and three in the Masonic Temple, a much larger hall, and all on Sunday evenings. A brief statement of the subjects of the lectures can alone be given, from which it will be perceived how important they are, and how much good must necessarily have been produced.

Lecture 1. The meaning, origin, nature and sanctions of morality; in a word, Speculative Ethics.

2. The virtues of morality or practical morals, that is, the different forms of moral virtue. Christian morals — the distinctive traits. Comparison of the morality of the Christian world with the genuine Christian morality.

3. Christian morals — a branch of Sunday School instruction. Principles or methods which the teacher should observe in giving such instruction.

4. The Bible — a text book of moral instruction. The

morality of the Old Testament considered — objections answered. The morality of the New Testament — general remarks.

5. The character and teaching of Jesus Christ as illustrations of Christian morals.

6. The Acts and Epistles as affording illustrations of moral character and duty. Concluding remarks on the responsibleness and privilege of the office of a teacher.

Rev. Frederick T. Gray, one of the Ministers at large of this city, as representing this Society, and at the request of the Directors, has, in the course of the past year, attended several Sunday schools in this vicinity, and some at a distance, and addressed the schools. He has in some instances availed himself of the occasions presented by an observance of the anniversaries of schools, and in others, of the opening and closing of schools, which are discontinued for a part of the year. In some towns Mr Gray has addressed the parents of the children, as well as the children themselves, and such others as felt interested to attend. And the Directors would recommend that opportunities be embraced in all schools, of presenting their claims and importance, and especially of persuading parents to interest themselves fully and deeply in the promotion of a cause so important to them and their children. Such addresses give an impulse, which both teachers and children feel, and the good effects are seen in the improvement of the schools.

After the last annual meeting, the Directors of the Society passed a vote that the corresponding Secretaries be authorized and requested to open a correspondence with any society or individual in England, or in Europe, by which he might hope to promote the general objects of the Society. Accordingly letters were addressed to gentlemen in Liverpool, London, Manchester, and Bristol, England, soliciting information respecting their Sunday schools, and particularly as to the mode of conducting them, and as to the books or manuals used by teachers and children. Answers have been received to some of the letters, expressing deep interest in Sunday school instruction,

and manifesting the greatest willingness to give all the information solicited.

The Secretary of a Sunday school association which has been recently formed in London, writes, that "the great evil that is experienced in this country, in any attempt to educate the community, is the spirit of sectarianism that predominates, tending to narrow the sphere of general usefulness. This evil is felt by the Unitarians to a greater extent than by any other class, for they alone are excluded by orthodox prejudices from the privileges of co-operating with their fellow-christians of other denominations in any general plan for the promotion of Sunday school instruction. It was to supply in some partial degree a desideratum thus created, that the teachers and friends of Sunday schools in this city projected, in the early part of the last year, the formation of the Sunday School Association; whose object will be found analogous to those of the Boston Sunday School Society."

"The *first* object was to provide by publication, or otherwise, suitable elementary books for the use of the children in our schools.

"The *second* object was to connect together in one common bond of interest the teachers in our Sunday schools of the metropolis and other parts of the country, so that by a mutual interchange of information, the means of usefulness might be extended.

"The *third* object contemplated by its projectors was, to afford aid, either pecuniary or otherwise, to schools that might exist in poor districts, or to assist in the formation of schools where none had heretofore existed.

"The attention of the Committee has been mainly directed to the first of these objects, and the publication of a series of elementary books has been commenced. An annual subscription constitutes membership. The number of schools now in connexion with the association is twelve.

"Before introducing to your notice," the letter proceeds, "the modes of tuition adopted in this country, I may remark, that I

have reason to believe, that both in the classes of children that attend the schools, and in the kind and degree of instruction communicated, there is a vast difference between the United States and England. In the former education is very generally diffused and the poor have the opportunity of acquiring the elements of general knowledge on other days than Sundays, whilst in the latter the means of education are much more limited and a large proportion of the children of our poor are left wholly destitute of all mental and moral discipline, except that which is to be inculcated in our Sunday schools, and hence a great portion of the teacher's time is occupied in teaching the elements of general knowledge; so that with us that which should be the primary object of Sunday school instruction holds in many instances a subordinate position.

"In London there are but four Unitarian congregations that have Sunday schools attached to them. The teachers of some of these schools are in the habit of meeting together monthly, on which occasions a manuscript monthly magazine is read, consisting principally of original papers furnished by the teachers themselves — the reading of this and the conversation that ensues, occupies the time of meeting, about an hour and a half. In addition to these monthly meetings, the teachers of each school meet quarterly for the purpose of legislating as to the government of the school; the executive being generally vested in the teachers, who elect officers and exercise an absolute control over the institution. Some of the schools hold anniversary meetings, when children are arranged in their various classes, and an interrogatory examination takes place on some portion of scripture previously read; after which rewards are partially distributed. An address is frequently delivered to the children, and subsequently among the friends present the subject of Sunday school instruction becomes the topic of discussion."

In the above letter, there was enclosed one from the Rev. Mr Means, pastor of the Cole's street congregation, in London, giving a statement somewhat in detail of the discipline adopted in the school connected with it; and the plans adopted in the other schools of that city are similar.

"The Cole's street congregation," that letter states, "is one of the smallest among the Unitarian congregations in London. The morning (which may be considered as the regular,) congregation does not average above fifty persons, and of these the greater part are in rather humble station, and there are not any that can be designated as wealthy. One thing, however, favorable to the success of the school is the large proportion of young persons in the congregation. In the evening the congregation is increased to seventy or eighty, chiefly by the attendance of poor persons from the neighborhood, or of the parents of the Sunday scholars.

"The school was opened in December, 1830, and for some time the attendance was comparatively small. For some time past it has been pretty well attended, and probably for three years there have never been fewer than one hundred children; — at one time there were nearly or quite one hundred and forty. At present there are fiftysix girls and fortyeight boys belonging to the school; and there are eleven persons engaged in the instruction of the children, or general management of the school.

"The school is opened in the morning by the reading of a small portion of scripture, (eight or ten, to fourteen or fifteen verses, usually from the gospels,) prayer and singing. The afternoon school is closed by an address from the superintendent, singing and prayer. The addresses are either didactic or narrative — the subject in the latter case taken from the scriptures. The superintendent is now going through the Old Testament history, and before commencing the address, usually questions the children on the one last delivered.

"The instruction given in the school on Sunday is limited to reading and religious instruction. It might be said that all the instruction is religious, were it not that those who enter are often so ignorant of the first rudiments of knowledge, that they need to be taught even their letters — with this exception all the instruction is of a religious character. But to go into particulars:—

"The class of '*little girls*' and the first classes (the classes

are numbered from the least to the most advanced children,) of boys and girls learn to read and spell from the 'First book for Sunday schools,' published by the Sunday School Association. They learn also a little catechism entitled 'The first principles of religion in question and answer, for the use of young children,' by a lady. As they are not able to read, they learn this catechism by repeating it after the teacher.

"The second classes of boys and girls read in bible stories, by the Rev. S. Wood, a gentleman whose exertions in the cause of Sunday school instruction, entitle him to the thanks of the friends of education. They learn also Dr Carpenter's catechism.

"The third classes of boys and girls read in the scriptures. Some of them learn a scripture catechism, by the late Rev. Samuel Palmer. He held a sort of middle place between the Orthodox and the Unitarians. His catechism needs explanation and perhaps would be objected to by those whose opinions are in the extreme either way.

"Once a quarter," the letter proceeds, "the parents are requested to attend, when an address is delivered to them, and afterwards prizes are distributed to those children who are recommended by their respective teachers as deserving."

Accounts have also been received as to the Sunday school connected with the Unitarian Society, in Bristol. The secretary of the school, writes that "there is only one Unitarian Sunday school in Bristol, consisting of about eighty boys and eighty girls, who meet in separate rooms. They assemble for two hours before morning service, and again from two to four o'clock in the afternoon. The schools are opened and concluded with prayer. A hymn, also, is generally sung. The business of the schools is conducted by two superintendents in each (for morning and afternoon) and about *ten* male and *fourteen* female teachers. The boys' school is divided into six classes, — the girls' into seven.

The books, &c. in use in these schools, are Bibles and Testaments; New Testament Geography; Field's Questions; Wood's

Bible Stories, Old Testament; do. do. do. New Testament; Barbauld's Hymns; Watts' Hymns, Dr Carpenter's edition; Watts' Catechism; Hughes' First Book. There is also a small introductory Catechism used, and a very good selection from the Old Testament, which was published for the use of the government school in Ireland.

"The elder classes sometimes commit passages of scripture to memory, and those in the girls' school have lately been exercised in recollection of Dr Channing's sermon on the duties of children, and Mr Gannett's sermon to children. The children attend chapel in the morning, but their presence is not required at the evening meeting, though many attend with their parents.

"In May, a general examination of the whole school is made by one of our ministers, before the members of the congregation; and it has been found to be best that the minister, at his own discretion, should put questions adapted to the ages of the different children; and it is intended in future to arrange the business of both schools in such a manner, that among *all* the children the examination may show their real general progress. Attached to the school is a library, open to all, and of which much use is made.

"The teachers of the boys' school form a Committee of Arrangements, with the addition of four senior members of the congregation, (chosen by the teachers), and the minister for the time being. They meet on the first Sunday in each month. This plan has been found of most essential service in promoting the interests of the school, in encouraging the teachers in their labors of love, and especially in binding the different classes of teachers together in one heart and one mind. From many causes it has not been found practicable to adopt this plan among the ladies, who meet four or five times a year to transact the business of their school.

"We have a Bible Class of recent formation, for the reception of boys after they have left the school, and we have lately gone through a little work of considerable value — Uncle Philip's Conversations on the Evidences of Christianity, published in

New York. The seventh class of girls corresponds in a great degree with this bible class, and consists in many instances of girls who have left the Charity School, and are at service. They have been a long time in the school, and it is highly gratifying and encouraging to their teachers, to observe the degree of their religious culture, and the deep interest they take in these subjects. They go through the history of our Lord's Ministry, with questions prepared on the plan of the New Testament Geography by their morning teacher; these she reads and explains to them previously to their learning them; they write recollections, learn an excellent little catechism, (which is included), commit to memory devotional poetry, read portions of the epistles, and have lately begun Mr Ware's valuable little volume on the "Formation of the Christian Character."

"The children in our schools," the writer states, "are nearly (if not quite) all of very poor parents, and too many with little opportunity of improvement beside that obtained in the Sunday school. I mention this because it appears to us, from all we can learn, that parents of a better class than with us, send their children to your Sunday schools. I am the more inclined to adopt this opinion, from the tone of many papers and addresses in your very valuable periodical, published at Boston, the 'Christian Teachers' Manual.' We much regret that this has been discontinued.

"As to the results of our labors in Bristol, I can only generally state our conviction, that good, much good, has been done. I know not that I can bring any decided proof of this; but my conviction is not lessened."

A lady has sent from Bristol a set of Questions which she prepared to assist her in instructing her own class, (the eldest), consisting of children from the ages of eleven to fifteen. Many of the questions are from Field's book, but they vary in many particulars, as well as in the order of time, which is arranged according to Dr Carpenter's view of the length of our Lord's Ministry. Her plan of instruction was, to read the portion to be learnt to the children, explaining any difficulties and point-

ing out the places mentioned, and giving each child a copy of the questions, and on the following Sunday they were to be prepared with the answers. She always found that the children took a deep interest in their lessons. The questions are in manuscript, and have never been published.

A letter has also been received from the Rev. Mr Beard, of Manchester. He states that "the mode of conducting our Sunday schools, is chiefly as follows: — The children assemble at nine o'clock on the Lord's day morning — at a quarter past, the names are called — then a religious service, viz., a hymn, a short prayer, a short address, conducted by the director, sometimes called superintendent. Then the routine of the school duties commences, in which as much of the Lancasterian system as possible is used. The great difficulty is to procure suitable teachers — persons sufficiently interested and persevering, I mean, and more than all other things, sufficiently imbued with a sense of the importance and dignity of the work, and penetrated with a love of souls.

"The books used are various; catechisms in the elements of religion and duty are common, though I am no friend to such dry pieces of dissection as they commonly are. The custom is abating of using the Scriptures as a book to learn to read from. I wish it had ceased; it is highly injurious. They should be read for their proper, viz. religious purposes — read as a reward for successful labor, and never without a competent expounder. The principal truths of religion are, I know by experience, best taught from them."

The Directors are much gratified that a communication has been opened with warm friends of Sunday schools, who in a distant land are striving to improve them; and the Directors take much pleasure in presenting to the Society the intelligence which has come from afar, being instructive and interesting. And the kind feelings and cordial sympathy with which our applications were met, are most heartily reciprocated; and it must be the ardent wish of all, that "a bond of fraternity should be permanently consolidated," and that we should "encourage each other in our most interesting work."

As usual, the Directors sent a circular to the various schools in this country which have heretofore made communications to the Society, and to many parishes under the charge of pastors who might be supposed friendly to it. Many replies have been received, and as full extracts from them will be made as the limits of this Report will permit. Some of the teachers belonging to the Sunday school connected with the Rev. Mr Thomas's Society, in Concord, N. H., a few months ago established a school for the religious instruction of the convicts in the State Prison, which is located in that town. Mr Thomas having been appointed a chaplain of the prison, those teachers thought that in addition to his services, they could bear "a part in the endeavors to do good to the souls of those, who for their crimes were suffering the penalties of the law." The proposition was made to the Warden to devote a portion of the Sabbath for the instruction of the prisoners in the Holy Scriptures, desiring that it should be left entirely optional with them. It was so proposed, and the result was, that more than one half of the whole number readily and cheerfully united in the school — the parish school is held in the morning, and this immediately after the close of the afternoon service. Much encouragement is received, and an increasing interest is manifested, and in a few instances evidently a religious impression. The services of the school are singing and prayer; after the services an extemporaneous address, suggested by the lesson, varied occasionally to give a greater interest. Our correspondent writes, that "on our first acquaintance with the classes, we found them all familiar with scripture language, the Bible being almost the only book which they had been allowed to read; but although familiar with its language, they seemed to have a very imperfect and obscure view of its meaning. Some of them, if not open infidels, yet they were sceptical, and seemed to have read the Bible for the purpose of finding statements contradictory, and in the writings of St Paul, 'those things which were hard to be understood' troubled some who were disposed to believe, while they seemed to confirm and settle those inclined to doubt and scepticism.

With these difficulties before us, we entered upon the duty of teachers. Our first endeavor was to secure confidence, by assurances that we came not by appointment or for wages — that we came voluntarily and cheerfully to render them any service in our power by instruction or advice — that it was our ardent wish and prayer to promote their temporal and spiritual happiness.

"We assured them that although as convicts they were suffering for their crimes the just penalties of the law, yet they were not separated from the sympathy of the world; that as our heavenly Father is represented, in the parable of the prodigal son, as experiencing emotions of joy at his return to his father's house, so would the good and the virtuous here on their return to the intercourse of society, overlook and forgive on their repentance and reformation what was past.

"Having, as we believe, secured confidence and a disposition to receive instruction we commenced with the use of Allen's Questions on the Acts of the Apostles. After the recitations we ask to have any questions of perplexity and doubt proposed from any portion of the Bible, to be received and answered on the succeeding Sunday; and many questions have been thus proposed, with an evident desire to seek for information and not for cavil or mere curiosity."

This undertaking is fully set forth in the Report, because it exhibits zeal and piety displayed for the most benevolent object, and most justly worthy of imitation. Religious instruction is regularly afforded to the convicts in our State Prison at Charlestown, by Christians of different denominations, and many from the Divinity School at Cambridge instruct there.

I. The first question proposed in the circular was, as to the modes of instruction pursued in the various schools, and the modifications which had been made in the methods of conducting them. The manuals in most common use are the Worcester Catechism, and Allen's Questions — first, second and third parts: others are used, such as Nichols's and Gallaudet's Natural Theology and books on the soul, Bulfinch's Holy Land, Hannah Adams's Letters on the Gospel, &c.

The following extracts give valuable information as to the mode of conducting schools, and the best methods of instruction.

1. "Our mode of instruction in former years has been somewhat desultory. We had indeed used Allen's Questions, and similar works in some of our oldest classes. But at the commencement of the last summer, we introduced a great variety of manuals into our school. We endeavored to select a series, which should supply the wants of the young as well as the old. We did not, it is true, find just such a course as we wanted, and it seems to us, that a good book for the youngest classes in Sunday schools is a desideratum. Still we think these text books have answered a good purpose. We do not confine ourselves to them entirely. Every teacher now has a foundation for his instructions and is expected to prepare himself. At the same time other interesting matter is not excluded; whenever an exciting topic is started, we endeavor to make it useful."

2. "Our method of instruction is various, adapted as much as possible to the ages, characters and attainments of the pupils. Some of the youngest of the scholars study catechisms — among these Peabody's Catechism in rhime seems to be the most popular — others commit to memory passages of the New Testament Scriptures. Several classes study a little Manual, prepared by a lady of my parish, containing questions upon portions of the gospels and explanations of difficult passages. Other classes study Allen's Questions, two or three classes study Nichols's Theology, in which they are very much interested. In addition to hearing the regular set lessons, the teachers ask questions respecting the books which have been read during the previous week. Several of the teachers are furnished with Mrs Hamilton's questions, which are used incidentally to good advantage. Each teacher pursues that method which he thinks best adapted to his class."

3. "Since the introduction into our Sunday school of the Questions on the New Testament, in three parts, (Allen's) we have not adopted any important modifications in our modes of

instruction. Two or three of the younger classes are instructed by some of our more experienced teachers without the use of manuals. By all the other classes manuals are used, and the lessons for the day are studied at home. There is one advantage belonging to this method which I do not recollect to have seen noticed in the numerous essays and addresses relating to Sunday schools which have appeared in print. It is this: parents are often obliged to assist the children in finding out the answers to the questions; and by this means gain a better knowledge of the Scriptures themselves, than they would be likely to secure in any other way."

4. "Besides a monthly address by the junior minister, a general lesson has been given once a month by one of the male teachers or the superintendent in rotation. The school is taught in the meeting-house for an hour before the morning service. The children assemble near the pulpit for the singing, prayer, and the general lesson, after which the classes occupy each its particular pew, over the body of the church. Each teacher gives that course and follows that method of instruction which seems to him or her best with the children of the class; we have generally however been approaching a greater uniformity of instruction than prevailed in the early days of the school, and are especially aiming to make all the exercises strictly religious."

5. "We have made no alterations in our method of instruction, or in the books used, which are the same used in other schools. In my last I made some observations on attention to the 'Evidences of Christianity' in our school, and particularly in a class (the most advanced one) under my particular care and direction. We have just finished 'Butler's Analogy,' and I can add with confidence, that it has been a profitable and not an uninteresting study to the pupils, all of whom have been members of the school from its commencement in 1828, and have advanced to that great and difficult work, from the simplest books for children."

6. "We have during the last year introduced into the school, before singing the dismission hymn, a short general exercise-

given by some one of the male teachers, alternately, occupying from ten to twelve minutes, (never more than fifteen minutes), which has become a very interesting part of our exercises, and we fondly trust impressions are sometimes made by this portion of our services, which would not probably be effected in any other manner. The speaker makes it a point to adapt his language to the comprehension of all his hearers, even the youngest cannot fail to appreciate much, that is thus addressed to them. The teacher usually confines himself in each address to a single, specific duty, growing out of our religious, moral or social obligations; and endeavors to press the importance of its observance on the minds of his youthful hearers in an interesting, intelligible manner. And he almost always succeeds in securing the strict attention of a large proportion of the whole school In short, the service is neither more nor less than preaching to the scholars a very short, impressive sermon; adapted to the comprehension of almost the very youngest. The whole school is also addressed regularly every three months by our minister, when the parents are invited to be present."

7. "The method of instruction in our school is essentially the same as it has been. Singing and prayer are the opening exercises of the school. A general lesson follows, of ten or fifteen minutes, which is in the form of an especial address to the children. Of this method of instruction we entertain a favorable opinion. We have observed its tendency and effects for a number of years, and we cannot be mistaken, we think, when we ascribe to it no little of the success which has attended our labors. It has done much to win over the children to a love of religion, to a regard for the Bible, to a higher and more intelligent veneration and reverence for their invisible, but Almighty creator and Father in heaven. It has done something, we believe, to correct the errors of childhood, to inspire a spirit of benevolence and love towards their companions and the human family, and to make them feel more strongly their obligations to their parents, teachers and friends. This exercise is followed by teaching in the classes; the great aim of which is to impress

upon the minds of the children, a clear and full knowledge of the scriptures, — a desire for spiritual improvement, — a love of virtue, — a deep and cheerful piety, — the hope of immortality, — and a future retribution."

8. "Our mode of instruction has varied essentially from that formerly pursued. In addition to the manuals in common use we have three classes in Paley's Natural Theology, composed of those more advanced, and a class is about commencing the study of the Evidences of Revealed Religion. We believe the effect to be good of the introduction of these higher branches in the school under the direction and instruction of competent teachers. We have been so happy as to have the voluntary and cheerful attendance of such the present season, and while the effect is beneficial and profitable to those thus instructed, it removes the objection too often felt by many young persons that they are too old to attend Sunday schools, and that they are only fitted for the instruction of children. The Sunday school is designed and profitable for little children, for those whom our Saviour affectionately invited to 'come unto him,' but it is equally profitable for those more advanced in years, who are all of us, as it respects that knowledge which is to make us wise unto salvation, but 'babes in Christ.'"

"It has been our endeavor, as far as practicable, to use the manuals only as aids in conversation with the pupils. We think the mere repetition of what is contained in the manuals of but little worth in producing a religious interest. This interest to be felt, must be produced by familiar and easy conversation and those truths which the teacher would impress, must be felt and experienced by himself: if thus felt, and the teacher comes to the work with deep interest and feeling in the spiritual wants and necessities of those who are listening to his instructions, it cannot be doubted that he will communicate and awaken a kindred feeling in them, and his success will be certain."

II. The reports which have been received exhibit an addition in many of the schools to the number of children and teachers, and assurances are given which indicate an increasing

interest in Sunday school instruction. Almost all the schools, from which accounts have been received, are stated to be flourishing and prosperous; and as an example, the following statement, being an extract from the seventeenth annual report of the well known school at Portsmouth, N. H., made to their own Society will be presented.

"At no time since the commencement of the school have the superintendents felt themselves at liberty more cordially to congratulate its friends and patrons upon the happy appearance which it presents, than at the present moment. On several other anniversaries we have been able to present statements of greater accessions to our numbers, and a more numerous list of scholars, but at no time have we felt more confidence in saying that our work goes on well. Unless we deceive ourselves, there is an unusual engagedness both in pupils and teachers, which is far more cheering to behold, than crowded seats with listless, indifferent and idle faces. There is a regularity and punctuality of attendance in both pupils and teachers, which causes the business of the school to go on with ease and effect, instead of that unsteady and uncertain motion which is so embarrassing and so destructive to all useful progress. The few changes which have taken place among our teachers is undoubtedly one great cause of this favorable state of things. The longer the teacher is with us, the more strongly will he become impressed with the conviction, that without regular attendance, and uniformity of attention in himself, he can no more produce the same in his pupils, than he can hope, without a deep religious feeling in his own breast, to produce such a feeling in the hearts of his pupils. But it is not from the appearance of order only, that we are led to believe that there is improvement among us; we think it is seen in an increased solicitude to acquire and impart correct religious knowledge, and especially to animate each other to *warmer, deeper feelings of piety.* We cannot but hope that there is a growing conviction that religious knowledge, like other knowledge, is useless, unless it lead to practical results. That ourselves and our pupils may know by rote

the whole Bible may be able to explain its historical, geographical and theological meaning — and yet the mind be left like the sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal: that if the fear of God and the love of duty grow not with the growth of knowledge, our labor is vain, and we and our pupils may die in our sins."

III. In answer to the question in the circular, "What appears to be most wanting to increase the usefulness and improve the condition of the schools?" the following answers have been given:

"*Interest, interest* among teachers, parents and pupils, — interest in religion, in the truths of Christianity, in moral and religious improvement." "We need, first, a more general and hearty co-operation from parents, and secondly, more able, pious and devoted male teachers." "We want energetic co-operation from parents. The prosperity of a school depends mainly on the teachers, but unless parents second their efforts, much of their labor will be lost. If parents would take care, that their children commit their lessons; if they would instruct them on subjects connected with their studies, and endeavor to warm their hearts with the feelings, which pure philanthrophy and religion inspire, teachers would be more successful. We need something to bring more boys into the school. The older boys lose their interest in the school too early. At the most important period in their lives, too many of our young lads become ashamed of their religious teachers, ashamed of the simplicity of their childhood, and are left during their first struggles with the temptations of manhood subject to evil influences without moral culture."

The following extracts from other reports are deserving of much attention in this connexion.

1. "A very considerable increase in the number of our teachers may serve to show how much a single, able and zealous individual can effect for the good of a Sabbath school. Our school has been in operation two years. At its commencement it was nearly impossible to procure any teachers whatever. Almost all who were applied to, declined, not from any unwillingness to undertake the task, but from a sincere and perhaps

very reasonable conviction that they were not qualified to instruct others. During the two past years the individual alluded to has devoted himself to rather a large class of young persons, and so has been instrumental in training and educating a very efficient company of teachers. When it is recollected that one of the greatest difficulties societies have had to encounter has been the want of teachers, we certainly have a right to hope that individuals who are qualified, will also be willing to exercise their talents and communicate their knowledge for the praiseworthy purpose of educating Sabbath school instructers. There are in every society professional men, well qualified for this work, and who only need to be made sensible of their power to be persuaded to exercise it."

Also, as stated in another report, "We have at present a greater number than ever before of that most desirable class of teachers — those who have themselves been pupils in our school — one half the number of our present male and female teachers having been thus with us in former years."

2. "Our school though flourishing, is very far from that state to which we wish to bring it. There is a considerable number of males in my parish of a suitable age, who do not attend; and in respect to some of those who join the school, I must say that their attendance is quite irregular especially in the more busy seasons of the year. The correction of this evil lies principally with parents or guardians, who should obviously require the attendance of their children at the Sunday school, as much as at the District schools, whenever it is possible for them to come, and assist and encourage them in studying their lessons at home. And this should be done not only on those Sabbaths when their children attend the school, but whenever they are detained at home; so that they may keep pace with the classes to which they belong.

"In some cases a visit from the teacher and a conference with the parents on the subject would be likely to ensure a more constant attendance of the children, and prove advantageous in other respects. But what is most important of all is,

that the heart of the teacher be imbued with the spirit of piety. And in this sentiment I am confirmed by the experience of each successive year. Without this, indeed, the lessons may be diligently studied and correctly recited and much valuable information obtained; but after all the great object of Sunday school instruction will not be secured. The heart and conscience of the child will not be reached; and the religious sentiment will not be awakened and very little moral benefit will be conferred."

3. "We consider our school to be in a flourishing condition. We can truly say that there never was a time since the foundation of our school, of more devotedness on the part of the teachers and interest on that of the children, than the present: still there is much yet to be done.

"If anything in the power of man can increase the usefulness and improve the condition, not only of ours, but of every branch of this institution throughout the land, it is the true spirit of Christ in the soul of every Sunday school teacher, animated by the cordial expressions of love and gratitude of parents towards him for his disinterested care and watchfulness over their children.

"Fathers, mothers! it rests with you, under God, to make the Sunday school what it was designed to be. Give it your ready support; let it occupy a high place in your affections; let your presence be often witnessed by the children in the midst of this their weekly assembly; let them see by your lives, by your counsel and advice, and by your hearty co-operation in all the means which shall be employed for the promotion of their best good, that your hearts throb in unison of sentiment with that of the Sunday school teacher, and God only knows the immense good that will result to these dearest objects of your affections — nay to yourselves even."

4. "In respect to outward means we are aware of no want, essential to the usefulness and improvement of our school — yet, we do believe that what is most wanting for the success, usefulness and improvement of our Sunday schools is that of expe-

rienced, intelligent, faithful and pious teachers — teachers deeply imbued with the principles and the spirit of our holy religion — alive, tenderly alive, to its unspeakable value and importance to the young; feeling truly the deep responsibilities which rest upon them — and possessing a fidelity in the performance of their duties, which no obstacle, no discouragement can overcome. With such teachers our Sunday school will not fail to increase in usefulness — improve in condition — and fulfil the glorious hopes of every true philanthropist and Christian."

5. "We want teachers; we want experience; we want a better, deeper knowledge of the nature of the soul, its high destination, its wants and the means of supplying those wants. We do not, none of us do, value enough the simple truths of Jesus, and their effect upon the soul, even in its infancy. We have not felt, as we ought, the wretchedness which a violated conscience brings on man, the misery to which unregulated passions and appetites will lead. We want faith in the glorious promises which are held out to the faithful followers of Christ. We want a better understanding of the words of our Saviour, when he said 'Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

"Give us teachers, give us hearts filled with love to man, imbued with the spirit of Jesus, and in this Christian community these will ensure the necessary aids."

IV. The following answers will be presented, which have been received in reply to the question proposed in the circular as to the means which have been used to excite in children a decided interest in religious instruction.

1. "None, except presenting at the close of the year a book to each of those who have not failed in attendance once during the year; but this is now abolished, and we do what we can to render our instruction interesting by showing the children their duty of love to God because he has loved them and done so much for them; the happiness of doing right arising from the inward peace which it confers; the beauty of virtue as exemplified in our blessed Saviour — that friend of little children — that perfect pattern for all of every age."

2. "We have endeavored to impress forcibly upon the minds of children the importance of realizing their entire dependence upon God for all they hope to enjoy in time and eternity, and their accountability to Him for every thought, deed and action of their lives, the importance of avoiding those temptations which so easily beset and ensnare them, to avoid the example of those who would draw them from obedience to God's holy law and righteous commandments; in a word, to think with affection and imitate the example of Him, who took little children in his arms and blessed them."

3. "We have used every effort within the limits of our power to call forth an interest in religious instruction by leading children to realize from observation and feeling the beauty of holiness, and to lead them from the productions of nature to the assurance of a great and good being, of whom the scriptures speak in every page as a God of infinite love. The sermon on the mount is a lesson constantly taught to all comprising the school, and its practical piety repeatedly reiterated."

4. "In our general lessons, and those of our classes we have thought the best 'means of exciting in children a decided interest in religious instruction,' was to give them *decided* religious instruction. While we have always endeavored to come to our children in the spirit of love, and to present them the character of their Father in heaven as altogether a character of love, we have taught them that as a Father, he must be honored and obeyed. We have not concealed the terrors of the Lord, though we have not made them an engine for effect. We have not found such instruction distasteful to our children — we have not found it necessary to confine our teachings to subjects chiefly addressed to the imagination or the senses."

5. "The affectionate, devoted, christian teacher we consider as the best means to excite the interest of the child: but so much do we need, in order to this, the countenance and support of parents, we believe it an important point to interest them: and as a means to effect this in some measure, we lately held a public meeting in conjunction with the first parish of our order

for the free discussion of the whole subject of Sunday schools. The children of both schools and their teachers were assembled on the occasion, with a large and attentive audience. This was done for experiment merely, and so well was it received, that we shall be induced to try it again."

V. It has been found by inquiry addressed to the schools, that many of them are not continued during the winter, in consequence chiefly of the difficulty of assembling the children of parents who reside at a distance from the place of meeting; and in many towns the schools are closed for nearly half the year. An opinion has been expressed by several, who have had opportunities of judging as to the effects of thus suspending the schools, that they do not suffer in consequence of it; and it has been observed that after children have for a time been deprived of the opportunity of attending the Sunday schools, the opening of them in the spring is hailed with delight, and the children partake eagerly of their renewing and cheering influence. The closing of the school should be to the parents an inducement for exertion to preserve its influence and render permanent its benefits by impressing on children the value of the instruction given, and pursuing at home, as nearly as circumstances will permit, the course of instruction which had been followed at school. Many of the reports state that when the schools are discontinued, the opportunity is embraced for meetings of the teachers, attended by their pastor to instruct them in their duties. It cannot, however, but be regarded by us the wisest course, wherever it is possible, to continue the schools throughout the year. And we adopt the sentiments, and would recommend the practice, mentioned in the report of the superintendents of the school in Portsmouth, N. H., who say, "We have no vacations except the six days of the week, and we have usually found them long enough to make our teachers and pupils ready to return with renewed vigor to their labors." The Directors think that by the continuance of a school through the year, greater interest on the part of teachers and pupils is secured, and more information communicated; and as we are subjects of the never ceasing

goodness and bounties of God, that we should embrace every opportunity of meeting together in the Sunday school to learn to love Him better and serve Him more faithfully.

VI. Upon the question, Whether parents are more or less attentive to domestic religious instruction in consequence of Sunday schools? being the last question presented in the circular, the Directors regret their inability to present from the reports which have been received very full answers. Its difficulties and importance are alike obvious. It proposes to follow the child from the Sunday school to his home, to trace him to his parents, to inquire how they receive him, and whether they strive to impress upon his mind the lessons which have been taught, or turn from him with indifference, feeling that as the child has been catechised at school, he need not be at home. From various causes the teachers in our schools, except those of schools conducted for the children of the poor, do not visit their pupils much at their homes. Most of them have parents or guardians able, and who should be willing, to watch over their children; and in most cases there would be a delicacy felt by teachers in entering the dwellings of those, who are competent to attend to their children, and who did not, it would seem, require that others should enter to excite them to the performance of their domestic duties. We can truly feel that this is the case with most of the parents and guardians of those who attend our Sunday schools. The question is of immense importance; for if a Sunday school is to be made a pretence for parents and guardians to neglect the religious education of the children under their care, better would it be that all the Sunday schools should be closed, for they would be stumbling blocks, which would lead many to fall, and prevent the performance of their duty. We state, however, without hesitation, our conviction that this is neither the effect nor the tendency of Sunday schools; and concur in the opinion expressed by some of our correspondents, that parents who would allow Sunday schools to be an apology for neglecting their children, would afford a poor substitute for them; and find perhaps, some other excuse for their indifference

to their own and their children's welfare, if the Sunday schools were taken from them.

Many of the reports contain expressions of opinion and conviction that parents are more attentive to the religious instruction of their children at home in consequence of their attendance at Sunday schools; and the reasons for this are well stated in the following extract :

" Undoubtedly the religious instruction which children receive in Sunday schools is the cause of more, rather than less attention to the subject on the part of parents, as it awakens in both parents and children an interest which in many instances would otherwise never be roused and, in all, is an incentive to further inquiry and investigation. Does a taste of religion ever satisfy? Does it not always increase the desire for it? Further, all who are concerned in teaching Sunday school pupils receive more or less instruction from it themselves, especially the teachers, who perhaps derive more benefit from it than those taught. Parents also come in for their share, because they are called upon to aid their children in their preparation for the school, and some parents, I doubt not, thus receive more useful religious instruction than in any other way. This must excite a taste for further improvement in religious knowledge and consequently a desire to impart it to their children. Sunday schools are thus rendered highly useful by their effects upon the whole families of those who attend them and are often germs of piety and morality, which grow and spread far beyond the spot in which they are planted."

We are able to give on this subject an extract from the report of the Howard Sunday school in this city, which it is well known is not connected with any religious society, and the children worship in the Friend Street chapel, which is under the charge of the Rev. Mr Gray. That report states, that " so far as our experience and knowledge extend, we are decidedly of opinon, that the instruction in our Sunday schools is directly calculated to interest and awaken parents more deeply in the religious instruction of their children at home. In our weekly intercourse

with our pupils, who are mostly in the more humble walks of life and many in abject poverty, we often see striking evidence of this fact. There are many parents, whose children attend our school, who have heretofore been totally indifferent and regardless of their moral and religious welfare, and who have even indulged in doubt and scepticism, but who have through the instrumentality of the child, in his simple account of what he has seen and heard at the school, in his eager inquiries to his parents for more information, and in the reading of his Sunday school library book, been awakened to a sense of shame at their neglect of religion. And they have been thus led to feel a deep interest in the school and have entered the sanctuary and listened to the truths of our holy religion, when nought but the intercession and simple eloquence of their children would ever have induced them to enter."

The Directors take much pleasure in announcing that in October last the Worcester Sunday School Society was organized, composed of the ministers, superintendents and teachers of Sunday schools within the limits of the Worcester ministerial association, and all other persons within the same limits who wish to become members. The object of the Society as stated in the Constitution is to "concentrate the efforts and to strengthen the hands of those who are interested and engaged in Sunday schools, and to improve and give more efficiency to Sunday school instruction, by collecting intelligence and disseminating useful information by means of public meetings and addresses, the publication of tracts and books, and the recommendation of works proper for juvenile libraries." All interested in Sunday schools must be highly gratified that such an association has been formed, and will most cordially wish it entire success.

The Directors of the Sunday School Society in the conclusion of their report, present their most grateful acknowledgements to all those who have addressed them, and they take great pleasure in placing side by side the accounts of the efforts of our friends in England, and in various parts of this country. Space separates us, but we are together in sentiment, feeling, and in our

common efforts for the good of others. That these efforts may be successful is our desire and prayer. And that they may be so, let no exertions be spared. There is every cause for encouragement: and let parents, teachers and children unite in every land in making Sunday schools, blessings to them and the world.

In behalf of the Directors of the Sunday School Society.

EDWARD BLAKE,
Corresponding Secretary.

Boston, May 27, 1835.

Henry B. Rogers, Esq. of this city, moved the acceptance of the Report, and addressed the meeting with great animation and effect. Suppose, said he, that an intelligent Pagan should come among us, and learn the character of our religion for the first time. He would surely be struck with the sublimity of its doctrines and the excellence of its precepts. He would feel that the religion which was presented to him came up to the highest conceptions he could form of moral goodness and truth. But he would at the same time be disposed to inquire into the practical effects of a religion of such an exalted character. What has it done, he would ask, for the people to whom it is given? Where are the proofs of its influence, the trophies of its power? He would see our churches open, and our population thronging into them to worship God. He would hear the song of praise, the solemn offering of devotion, the wise instructions of the pulpit, and with such a scene he could not fail of being deeply affected. But still, he might ask, is this all? Unless he saw something more, he might think that our religion was a mere philosophical dream. He might doubt its power to exert a practical effect on the hearts and lives of its followers.

Let him go then into one of our Sunday schools. What a spectacle would be presented before his eye! What an effect would be produced upon his mind! He would be filled with joy, at discovering such a beautiful illustration of the practical influence of our religion. I am attached to Sunday schools,

then, said Mr R., as a testimonial of our sense of the value of Christianity.

One point, continued he, is of great importance in this view, and that is, the influence of Sunday schools against scepticism. The present time, which swarms so abundantly with books, tracts, pamphlets, when much superficial and little sound knowledge is diffused, is favorable to scepticism. Every man feels competent to decide on every subject, and when ignorant men attack error, they are very apt to attack the truth which is mingled with it. On this last topic he was forcible and eloquent. He insisted upon two points, viz: that the knowledge obtained at these schools, commencing with the simplest catechism and extending through the Bible, to a course of natural theology, gave to Sunday school pupils such an amount of clear and satisfactory knowledge on religious subjects, that they would be protected by it from all the assaults of infidelity; and secondly that the deep religious impressions which they receive would be such as to shield them effectually from any danger of doubt or scepticism.

Mr R. continued his remarks on these points to a considerable length, and closed with urging the importance of giving sound and solid instruction to the pupils of our schools; he would have less of story and anecdote, and more of deep and everlasting truth, — less desire to entertain and please, and more to fill the mind with the divine light and knowledge which come from above.

The report was then accepted.

E. Weston, Jr. Esq. then offered a resolution in the following words:

Resolved, That Sunday schools are a powerful means of stimulating teachers to self-education.

Mr W. developed the principle embraced in this resolution in a brief but comprehensive address. He adverted to the fact that in general the knowledge of the Bible and of religious subjects is very indefinite and intangible. We discover this, he

said, when we enter the Sunday school and for the first time begin to teach. We then feel our own need of instruction, and are led, from the necessity of the case, to study. The investigation of one subject leads to that of another. The Bible, the great storehouse of religious knowledge, opens to us an unceasing fountain in our course of instruction and improvement. From this we are led to a study of natural history, where proofs start up at every step to convince us of the wisdom, goodness and power of God. In this way the whole circle of knowledge is opened upon the Sunday school teacher, and in this way his own education is rapidly promoted and secured.

Professor Ware, Jr. said that he had a few words to offer on a point already touched upon by preceding speakers, but of sufficient interest to claim a moment's further attention. We are indulging great hopes and confident expectation from this system of Sunday school instruction; we predict as its consequence a sort of renovation of society; we anticipate from it the most marked effects upon succeeding generations, and the prosperity and growth of the churches. How are we to ensure the accomplishment of this beautiful vision? How are we to make certain that it shall not be all a failure? It can only be, by the blessing of God, through the manner of teaching. And what shall that be? Not barely the outside of books, not the mere answers to Allen's Questions, and Nichols's Natural Theology, and Carpenter's Geography of the New Testament. These may be learned thoroughly, and yet no progress made in that only knowledge which will lead to the blessing of the world. The children must learn goodness and piety, must be instructed in principle, self-government and devotion, or they may go out into the world as unprepared as if they had never seen a Sunday school. And how shall they be taught these things? It can only be by teachers who themselves know them. No one can teach what he does not know. They that understand geography and natural theology, and scriptural exposition, can teach them; and they only who understand the virtues can teach them; and in order to understand the virtues, one

must possess them. No one can impart what he does not possess. It follows, therefore, first of all, that our Sunday school teachers should teach themselves, should cultivate their own characters, should themselves be devout, pious, religious, in order that they may be able to lead their pupils to devotion, piety, religion. Mr Ware went on to illustrate this idea, from the well known fact that feeling is excited by feeling, and that the heart is affected by sympathy; so that children will hardly be interested in any subject unless the teacher be interested in it, and the teacher will be unable to reach their feelings and sentiments unless by means of his own feelings. He therefore called upon the teachers to cultivate faithfully personal religion, and this the rather, because, if they contented themselves with a cold, formal, intellectual teaching of books only, without carrying home the power of religion to the hearts of the children, they would be hardening those hearts against impression by their very process of instruction. It would be the effect of this great machine of Sunday instruction to render their young minds familiar with all the words and forms of solemn truth, yet without feeling their power, and thus they might be hardened against impression, and prevented by an early acquired insensibility from ever afterwards entering into the religious life. These, he said, were considerations of solemn importance; and he desired to express them in the following resolution:

Resolved, That the main hope of the Sunday school system rests on the personal religion of the teachers.

Before sitting down, Mr Ware wished to advert to the affecting notice in the Report of the death of one of the distinguished friends and fellow laborers of this cause, Mr G. A. Sampson. I knew him well and long, said he; I honored and loved him. He did his work in this and other departments well, and in the midst of life was suddenly and mysteriously removed. He is gone to heaven. It is right that he should be remembered here, for he was in many respects a model for our teachers, and they should take the warning to-night, that before another year returns, some of them may in like manner be summoned.

He was not the only victim of the last year. By an equally sudden and awful visitation, another of our number, David Patterson, has been called away. "The sea his body, heaven his spirit, holds." He, too, was a "Christian merchant." His thoughts and deeds were of goodness. I knew and loved him from childhood, and always found him worthy. It seems as if it were but yesterday that he used to come up and recite his catechisms and hymns after the Sunday's service — always prompt and intelligent as he continued through life. Methinks I see him now — the bright, beautiful, manly boy, who afterwards taught to other children what he had faithfully learned, and is now, I trust, rejoicing in the glory that he loved.

Rev. S. K. Lothrop succeeded Professor Ware, and presented a resolution in these words:

Resolved, That the example of the Sunday school teacher should ever be a model for the pupil.

Mr Lothrop observed that parents were often disappointed in the result of their labors in the education of their children, and he ascribed the failure to the fact, that their practice was so frequently in opposition to their precepts. He said, the same principle was true as to the Sunday school teacher. If they would be successful their example must be a model for the pupil. He urged this in three particulars; first, as an example of christian *love*, overcoming all impatience, difficulty and opposition. They must exhibit that love which was taught by the Saviour in all their conduct, if they would have the pupil exhibit it when he shall come to act on the stage of life. Secondly, they must set an example of *veneration* and *zeal*. Teachers to impress their pupils with a veneration for sacred things must show that they possess this veneration by their daily words and actions. They must be engaged in their work, also, if they would engage the attention and interest of their pupils. And thirdly, they must set an example of attention to *forms*. The spirit, he said, was everything, but so long as we are human, we can hardly hope to attain it without observing the forms pre-

scribed to us in the gospel. The teacher therefore who would accomplish the most with his class, should be an example to them in this as in every other duty enjoined by his Lord and master.

Mr C. A. Bartol of the Theological School at Cambridge, offered the following resolution :

Resolved, That, in view of the influence exerted by Sunday schools upon parents, so far as this influence bears upon the young, we are *gratified* and *alarmed ;*—and that we hold it a general truth important to be impressed upon all, that, without the zealous co-operation of the parent, no outward institutions can avail for the true Christian education of the child.

Something has been said this evening of the influence of Sunday schools upon parents. It would be a wonderful thing indeed, if no such influence were exerted. For if parents are not excited in this work of instruction, one of three things must be true. Either Christianity, the instrument with which we work upon the child's mind, must be a powerless instrument, or the child is after all not possessed of a moral nature, through which an influence may be poured into the parent's heart, or the parent himself has perverted his own soul. We know that Sunday schools are, at times, directly or indirectly the means of exerting great influence upon parents. A little history to this point has come to my knowledge, which may have sufficient importance to be spoken of here.

There lived in Troy, N. Y., a little girl, whose name was Elizabeth Nelson. She was the daughter of sceptical parents ; but, by the kindness of a benevolent old lady in the place, became a member of the Sunday school. She was at length taken sick. The parents, with the anxiety of natural affection, used the means proper for her recovery, and called a physician. But he was an infidel physician. Infidel parents hung in sorrow over the bed of anguish. An infidel physician came to minister health to the poor body, in whose existence alone he believed. Time passed on ; and soon the child said to its parent, "I feel that my illness will be fatal." "O, we hope not," was the reply. "I

am persuaded that it will, indeed," was her answer. As she grew more faint with sickness and pain, she said to her father, "Father, do pray with me." The request produced a dead, painful silence. At length the mother said to her husband, "*Do* pray with Eliza beth." He moved mechanically to the bed side, and mechanically fell upon his knees, but was speechless. He could not teach his tongue in a moment the language of prayer. He could not accustom his heart in a moment to the spirit of prayer. And he left the bed without being able to pray for his child in this her last extremity. After another pause, the mother exclaimed, "Why, where did Elizabeth get all this?" The little girl, collecting what remained of her bodily strength, rose up in the bed, and answered for herself,—"Mother, you forget that I have been two years at the Sunday school."—She died. The sceptical parents and the infidel physician were a short time after seen in the solemn temple, sending up to God an adoration as fervent as could go from the hearts of any, who had long kept holy time. — How do such facts as these show the power of the child! How do they teach us to "be not faithless, but believing."

But the influence of Sunday schools is not always such as to produce, directly or indirectly, any such result. Thousands of parents give up their children entirely to the Sunday school. They seem to think that the soul of a child can be raised by machinery; that the system of means provided will certainly do its work. But how can an hour on Sunday morning successfully resist and dispose of the bad influences of a whole week? We have heard this evening a beautiful and touching account of two faithful laborers in this great work, now gone to their reward. If all teachers were like them, we might expect more from Sunday schools. But all teachers are not thus faithful. And, indeed, the whole work could not be accomplished if they were. The teacher may have the tongue of an angel, and the sympathy of Paul, and yet not accomplish it. Moral education cannot be carried on to great purpose in the lecture room. We may teach religion to the *intellect* there, but if we would teach

it effectually to the whole, living, choosing soul, we must do it in the scenes of actual emotion, suffering, trial. It must be taught in these scenes in the largest degree. The parents must teach it, or it is to be feared it will never be taught as it should be. The religion we give to many children is a religion of language — a thing of words. Or it is a thing of the outward deportment merely — the religion of the body — an unconscious hypocrisy. Or it is a thing of mere form and ceremony — the religion of prudence — of intellect. The religion we want to give is the religion of the heart — of the soul. Infidelity has been spoken of. Whence comes infidelity? Are its seeds dropped into the young heart by the infidel's own hand? Not in one case out of ten. Infidelity sends down its roots into this *false religious education.* If we would give the child a true religious education, we must touch the conscience, the affections, the will; and that they may be touched effectually, the parent must put his hand upon them when the teacher takes his away. It is the parent that must do the most to save his child from hypocrisy, from formality, from infidelity. Religion consists in a state of the affections, of the moral nature. It may exist with all degrees of intellectual refinement. We read of the poor widow, who in her ignorance ascends the funeral pile. And we cry out, monstrous! monstrous!! And yet she may have done it in love, and conscience, and reverence, and faith. Let these powers be well developed in the young soul, and the work is finished which was given us to do.

He was followed by the Rev. William G. Elliot of St Louis, Missouri, who introduced the following resolution :

Resolved, That Sunday schools are of great value as a means of increasing and strengthening our Churches and Religious societies.

As a citizen of the west, Mr E. adverted to the importance of Sunday schools in that section of the country especially, in increasing and strengthening new and feeble churches. He spoke of the school at Louisville and of its prosperity. He remarked

on the influence of a body of teachers united in one, and that a holy purpose, in giving strength to a religious society. But he dwelt mainly upon another and most important feature in connexion with his resolution. He said that children educated in the Sunday school acquired, and grew up with a strong interest in the subject of religion, and connected themselves early with its institutions, and it was this deep and united interest of a people that gave strength to any church or society. With a thousand members indifferent to religion, a society would still be weak; but with a few and these deeply engaged in the subject, their strength would be mighty.

A resolution was then offered by the Rev. Mr Burton.

Resolved, That Sunday school instruction is the Patriot's best HOPE for the prosperity of our country's free and happy institutions.

Mr B. contented himself at the late hour at which he rose with presenting a single idea on the subject of his resolution. The rising generation, he said, under the influence of Sunday school instruction were to bring with them into active life, as he believed, a different spirit from that which now created so much alarm in the minds of many citizens. Their object, he had faith to believe, would not be exclusively for wealth, office or pleasure, as now, but they would come clothed in that seamless garment of purity and truth, which should raise them above the seductions of time, that they might gain an imperishable crown in the future world. He believed they were to bring in a new era of peace and love; that they would come forth with the olive branch in one hand, and the balance of justice in the other, and dissensions, wars and iniquity would then comparatively cease. This nation would become a prophet nation to the whole earth, and the great principles of a republican people, virtue and true religion, would prepare them for the republic of Heaven.

Rev. Mr Sullivan immediately afterward rose, and offered some remarks on the standard to be required of a Sunday school teacher, which he believed should not be so high, as some had maintained; and of the importance of educating the conscience.

Rev. Mr Putnam of Roxbury then offered a resolution in these words:

Resolved, That the hearty thanks of the clergy are due to their lay brethren for their zealous and efficient co-operation in the religious culture of the young through Sunday schools.

Mr Putnam spoke with much animation and effect; but we can give only a faint idea of the impression he made. He adverted chiefly to the change which had taken place within ten years as it respects the labors of the laymen in the cause of religion. We were invited, said he, to this meeting by laymen. The society was instituted by laymen. Its officers are mostly laymen. Formerly their money and counsel, but now their personal labors are afforded. He then appealed to the President, Dr Tuckerman, who had more experience than himself, if he had ever anticipated that he should receive such aid in his work as the Sunday school had since given him? — But, said he, the teachers say, we have only done our duty. True, but are they not entitled to our thanks, that they have placed their standard of duty so high and performed it so faithfully? — They say it is a source of pleasure, and therefore they deserve no thanks. But sir, ought we not to give them our thanks, that passing by the seeming pleasures which so many others seek and love, they have been willing to find their pleasures in the self-sacrificing duties of the Sunday school teacher? Yes, sir, they *do* deserve our thanks: — and I thank them in the name of the clergy; in the name of the community; in the name of Christ; and in the name of God, in whose work they are engaged.

This motion was seconded, with some remarks, by the Rev. Mr Gannet, and Professor Ware, when it was passed by their suggestion, *viva voce*, on the part of the clergymen.

The meeting was closed by a few remarks from the President, and the singing of the hymn

"From all who dwell below the skies."

Great attention and interest was manifested by the audience to the close of the meeting, and the impression left upon the

hearer was of the most animating and Christian character. If some were depressed for a moment by the high standard proposed for the teacher, it was only to adopt new resolutions to attain that excellence of character and those other qualifications which are so necessary to their highest usefulness in the cause of Sunday schools.

*** An apology is due to the speakers on this interesting occasion for the very brief and imperfect manner in which their addresses are given in the above report. But circumstances prevented a more satisfactory account from being obtained in season for the publication.

A TABULAR VIEW OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS

At the time their last Reports were received by the Corresponding Secretary.

Towns.	Children.	Teachers.	Vols.	Dates.
Amesbury,	67	14	150	1832
Andover, North parish,	100			1830
Ashby,	151	23	300	1834
Atkinson, Me.	33	3	200	1830
Augusta, Me.	60	13	275	1832
Augusta, Geo.	28	5	150	1835
Belfast, Me.	70	12	350	do.
Brattleboro', Vt.	50	13	300	do.
Brewster, Mass.	93	12		1828
Brighton,	71	20	200	do.
Baltimore, Md.	80	15	200	1830
Brooklyn, Conn.	60	13		1834
" 2d school,	35	4		do.
Bridgewater, Mass.	90			1835
Bridgewater, North,	40	8	60	1830
Bridgewater, East,	148	23	200	do.
Barnstable,	115	19	200	1834
Beverly,	50	9	124	1832
Beverly, Rev. Mr. T.	205	48	200	1830
Berlin,	100	18	130	1832
Bernardston,	138	19	235	1835
Belgrade, Me.	35	4		1830
Bangor,	70	12	200	1832
Billerica,	100		150	do.
Brookline,	80	16	450	1835
Boston Hancock Sunday school,	100	19	260	do.
" Purchase st. " "	150	27	300	do.
" Howard " "	233	39	350	do.
" Chambers st. " "	209	31	400	do.
" Chauncy pl. " "	150	29	410	do.
" Hollis st. " "	450	71	400	do.
" New North " "	115	29	330	do.
" Brattle st. " "	150	27		do.
" Federal st. " "	150	29	214	do.
" S. Congregational "	105	16	800	1834
" Christian " "	70	14	90	1832
Burlington, Vt.	64	13	184	1835
Cambridge,	150	35	425	do.
Charlestown,	240	35	700	do.
Cambridgeport,	87	18		do.
Concord,	260	27	650	do.
Concord, N. H.	133	24	370	do.
Chelmsford,	65	11	120	1828
Charlton,	30	6		do.
Charlemont,	58	7	57	1836

Towns.	Children.	Teachers.	Vols.	Dates.
Cincinnati, Ohio,	50	10	300	1832
Castine, Me.	35	12	175	1830
Canton, Mass.	70	10	203	1833
Chelsea,	70	11	300	1834
Charleston, S. C.	70	3	150	1835
Dennis, Mass.	40	7	70	do.
Dublin, N. H.	94	19	1116	do.
Dedham,	120	19	270	1830
Dover,	60	10	238	1835
Dover, N. H.	104	16	100	1830
Danvers,	50	10	290	1829
Dorchester, Rev. Dr H.	104	15	200	do.
Dorchester and Milton, Rev. Mr C.	70	16	150	1835
Deerfield,	80	13	300	1830
East-Cambridge,	72	12	310	1834
Eastport, Me.	100	28	260	1835
Framingham,	100	17	260	1832
" Saxonville,	125	15	150	1835
Franklin, N. H.	60	9	100	1834
Hardwick,	60		150	1828
Hingham, Rev. Mr B.	100	20	400	1833
" Rev. Mr R.	140	19	350	1835
" (South) Rev. Mr Burton,	109	21	180	do.
Hallowell, Me.	70	15	380	1834
Hubbardston,	95	14	150	do.
Kingston,	90	12	390	1834
Kennebunk,	130	16	1000	do.
Keene, N. H.	80	17	275	do.
Leicester,	43	14		1835
Lexington,	150	24	250	1832
Littleton,	114	17		do.
Lowell,	125	16	150	1835
Lynn,	112	25		do.
Lancaster,	251	39	465	1834
Louisville, Ky.	50	15	280	1835
Marlboro',	62	12	350	1831
Marblehead,	225	42		1832
Meadville, Pa.	45	7	100	do.
Medfield, Mass.	70	17	300	1835
Mendon,	60	12	100	1832
Newburyport,	121	27	400	1835
New York, Rev. Mr L.	104	13	170	1829
" Rev. Mr W.	50	14	150	1832
Northampton,	64	12		1834
New Bedford,	50	10	300	do.
Northfield,	150	18	300	1835
Newton, Upper Falls,	48	9	125	1830
New Salem,	68	18	137	1832
Northboro',	133	21	300	1835
Norton,	109	10	200	do.
Portsmouth, N. H.	233	51		do.

Towns.	Children.	Teachers.	Vols.	Dates.
Portland, Me.	138	42	450	1835
Pepperell,	98	16	150	do.
Providence, R. I. Rev. Mr F.	80	20	360	do.
" Rev. Mr H.	161	40	300	do.
Plymouth, Mass.	200	30	500	do.
Philadelphia, Pa.	71	10	160	1832
Princeton, Mass.	140	20	250	1830
Provincetown,	43	6	175	1832
Roxbury, Rev. Dr G.	65	13	140	1835
" Rev. Mr P.	152	32	455	do.
" Rev. Mr W.	60	10	200	1832
Rochester, N. Y.	40	5		1829
Rowe,	45	8	70	1835
Sterling,	319	44	533	do.
Springfield,	149	25	300	1830
Sandwich,	70	10	200	1834
Stoughton,	44	7		1829
Saco, Me.	75	19	300	1832
Salem, Rev. Mr B.	140	21	400	1835
" Rev. Mr F.	117	28	375	1832
" Rev. Mr T.	88	23		1833
Sherburne,	80	23	250	1835
Stowe,	120	20	150	1832
Salisbury, N. H.	45	6	115	1834
Templeton,	100	14	150	do.
Trenton, N. Y. (Oldenbarneveld,)	12	4		1835
Taunton,	125	14	400	1832
Waltham,	150	30	600	do.
" Rev. Mr R.	100	9	400	do.
Warwick,	120	20	300	1835
West Cambridge,	92	21	130	1829
Worcester,	120	20	300	1832
Walpole,	100	11	300	1829
Weston,	64	12	300	1835
Watertown,	81	17	160	1834
West Dedham,	50	10	200	1835
Walpole, N. H.	160	27	200	do.
Wilton, N. H.	112	26	200	1833
Washington, D. C.	46	11	170	1830

Whole number of Schools, 135
" " Children, 13795
" " Teachers, 2388

THE

EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH

SKETCHES OF THE ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD ON THE

TWENTYFIFTH OF MAY, 1836.

BOSTON:
BENJAMIN H. GREENE.
1836.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

ANNUAL REPORT.

The directors of this society, in presenting their annual report, would state that the reasons for interest in Sunday school instruction were never greater than at the present moment. Experience and observation only deepen the conviction, that this is one of the most important means of bringing about that state of society which Christianity is designed to establish: the most important, they say, because the most effectual; for the religion of Jesus does not lay down set forms of government, does not prescribe rules for the mass and overlook the individual, but, aiming at the highest education for the individual, most effectually secures the prosperity of the whole people.

Now if these remarks be applicable to the cause of Sunday schools, we ought never to hear the voice of complaint on the ground of indifference. It is strange that the world is not kindled with zeal in a cause calculated to raise it to the best state of which it is capable; and that too without the least violence. It is owing to narrow views and false opinions — to false estimates of greatness, that while so much is done for the intellect, the moral part of our nature is suffered to lie comparatively waste and unfruitful. We are encouraged then to continue in our course, fully convinced, as we are, that when our progress does not answer our warmest hopes, it is impeded by indifferenc and prejudice — not by solid objections or unanswerable arguments.

Our correspondence affords ample testimony to the truths

above stated, and suggests many hints for improvement, which will appear in the course of this report.

The foreign correspondence, commenced prior to the last meeting, has been continued, and books, with copies of last year's report have been forwarded to those with whom letters have been exchanged. One answer only has been received, but that is so interesting, that no apology will be offered for introducing a large portion of it into this report. We are greatly encouraged to continue our intercourse, by the cordial welcome with which our letters have been received.

"The wish is general among our teachers," says the writer from Bristol (England), "to keep up the correspondence thus happily commenced; and it is in behalf of both of our schools that I now address the second letter to you. I think that there will be no unwillingness on your part to exchange one letter yearly with us, at least; and I cannot but believe that we shall mutually derive benefit from this friendly intercourse."

The letter then proceeds to give us the following extract from one of their annual Sunday school reports, of 1835.

"During the past year, a correspondence has been opened between the teachers of these schools and the Sunday School Society of Boston (N. England), in consequence of letters from Dr Tuckerman and the secretary of that society. The letter sent in reply by this committee, has since been printed in the Boston society's report. It is intended to maintain the correspondence thus commenced, and there is no doubt that this mutual interchange of expressions of interest in each other's success, and of communications of various plans of improvement, will be productive of much good." By reference to the last report of our society, the plans upon which these schools are conducted, will be seen, and, therefore the writer does not repeat them; but he suggests some valuable hints with regard to catechisms and manuals, which are well worthy our consideration; and which have frequently been alluded to by correspondents in our own country.

"We have been very sparing," says the letter, "in the use of

catechisms. To a certain extent, they are undoubtedly useful, in particular as serving to fix clearly and permanently in the minds of the young, facts and first principles, which may prove the basis of further knowledge and more enlarged views. They are also valuable in serving as a groundwork for the teacher, and in affording a good exercise for the scholar during the week. But if the catechism be merely learned by heart, and the teacher satisfy himself with seeing that his pupil has it perfectly, his labor will be well nigh vain. I confess I lay much more stress on the personal conversation and extempore catechising of an intelligent teacher."

"The above remarks apply equally to the use of manuals: invaluable as preparations for Sunday school lessons, they are out of place when the teacher brings them to his class, and reads a portion of them there. Let him study them in the closet; but in the school, let him out of the stores of his own mind, and the fulness of a heart deeply impressed with the value of the immortal souls around him, impart instruction to his pupils, and lead them gently into the ways of wisdom and the paths of peace."

"I now turn," says the letter, "with much pleasure, to an institution lately established among us, and arising in a great measure from the earnest exhortation of Dr Tuckerman during his visit at Bristol,—to visit the parents of our children. It has long been matter of regret with our teachers, that we have so little time for this desirable object. Indeed, owing to the weekly occupation of the teachers of the boys' school, it is nearly impracticable for them; but the ladies have now established a society for this express purpose, which promises to be of most essential service. The ladies engaged as visitors request us to say that they have had very great encouragement in their labors; they have found the parents very sensible of the importance of the instruction which their children receive, and very thankful for it. They have also appeared glad to have an opportunity of conversing with the teachers of the school respecting their children, and to receive their advice and sympathy."

In presenting the above extracts, the directors would state

their sympathy with the sentiments therein expressed, and would fully reciprocate the feelings of interest cherished toward the continuance of our correspondence. They cannot but regard this intercourse as one of the greatest means of acquiring new light, and advancing a cause that should know no limits, but which should prosper wherever the voice of man is heard.

Agreeably with our usual proceedings, and from a deep conviction that the cause of Sunday schools could be more effectually advanced by combined knowledge than by disconnected experience, circulars have been addressed to various schools, asking advice as to the best mode of carrying on our schools — thinking that new light might have been shed on some, which in this way might be enjoyed by all. A large number of replies have been received, calculated to excite a great interest in the community, and afford substantial encouragement to those engaged in the service of their master. The schools average 145 scholars. Every school is represented as being in a prosperous condition; and wherever there is any impediment to the full advantages flowing from these institutions, there seems to be great anxiety to remove it. The limits of this report will allow but one or two quotations indicating progress made, but they will be sufficient to show that there is much cause for congratulation and thanksgiving.

Our correspondent from Augusta (Geo.), wrote last year as follows. "The condition of my Sunday school has been such as would make it more agreeable, could I think it right, to leave your circular unanswered. I have this winter instructed ten children only, and that without assistance. One gentleman has recently given me his aid." He now writes, "I have the pleasure of stating a very encouraging advancement in my school since this time last year. The number of pupils is now increased to thirtyeight, with seven teachers; our society being small, this comprises a fair proportion of the children of the congregation. Our Sunday school library has been receiving some addition, and is now adequate to the wants of the school. An interest in the school is extending among the congregation, and for myself,

I can say that there is scarce anything connected with the church to which I attach more importance."

The minister at Louisville, (Ky.) writes, "the moral and religious influence of the school is very great; its numerical condition (about 60 scholars) is no exponent of its inward state. Teachers and scholars are all interested in their exercises, and as pastor of this church, I regard this school as a school of wisdom for me."

A letter from Barre states, "last year we numbered about sixty-seven scholars, most of them females and under thirteen years of age. Great effort was made during last season, and particularly since February, to awaken an interest in the congregation in this important measure; and I am happy to state to the society that they have been blessed to a general acknowledgement of their utility: the hearts of many have been turned to the good work, and our school is now in such a condition as to give joy to the heart of every Christian. Instead of a few very young children, we have now both sexes, and all ages, from the infant of five years to the hoary head of seventy, all heartily engaged in the study of God's word. There are now on our list 236 pupils, of whom 209 were present yesterday, arranged in thirty-one classes, with as many teachers. Among the number are four classes of male adults, and nine of female adults, and new classes are forming every sabbath. The present impression is that in the course of a month two thirds of our congregation will be in this school, seeking for the light of divine truth."

The superintendent of the Warren St Chapel in this city gives an interesting account of the school under his care, from which the following extracts are taken. "Our building was not opened until the close of last January; the Sunday school had till that time been carried on in connexion with the parish school of Hollis Street. It has since received considerable additions both of pupils and teachers. We have at present 235 boys, 297 girls, 15 male and 45 female teachers, arranged in 5 separate rooms.

"We find it important to look to the resources of nature in our connexion with the children: the movements of creation

arrest the minds of our pupils, and they readily catch the voice and import of its instruction. We gladly seize upon every opportunity to follow the example of our first great Teacher who borrowed his lessons from the fowls of the air, and the lilies of the field. We hope to be able to carry the school at least once a year into the country: we are forming a cabinet of natural history, and intend to have a large garden connected with our institution. The library has been rather hastily formed, and embraces about 400 works: it is to be opened on certain hours of the week days, to avoid a frequent source of interruption and confusion on Sundays."

There are accounts of very many other schools that would be listened to with much pleasure and profit, but we must hasten to the various subjects of discussion which the correspondence suggests, and accompany them with the various opinions of different superintendents.

One great topic is that of teachers' meetings, about which there is but one opinion; either as regards the annual meetings, as on the present occasion, or the private meetings of teachers of individual schools. The directors are persuaded that great advantages accrue from the intercourse thus maintained. The plans on which these meetings are conducted are different in different places: in some, subjects of doubtful tendency are discussed, while in others essays are read on some moral or religious subject: in both cases there arises some social conversation among individuals engaged in a common work, but whose occupations do not allow of intercourse at other times. With regard to the public annual meetings, a correspondent from Cambridge writes, "If we are to reach the true philosophy of Sunday school instruction, it must be by bringing together from year to year, as we do, facts and statements from a wide extent of society and various situations, and thence to draw some general principles applicable to all, or which throw light on all. In addition to this use, we hardly need say how much these contributions of local and individual experience help to encourage our hearts, and nerve our arms in the good work."

A writer from Northboro', referring to the meetings of the Worcester Sunday School Society, remarks, "They seem to have awakened a new interest in the community in favor of Sunday schools. The impression left by the meeting in August last, I am sure, will not soon be effaced. The spectacle of two hundred teachers all devoted to the same blessed work, was beautiful, exhilarating and sublime. Few could witness it without deep emotion, and the valuable considerations presented by the speakers could not fail to stir up the teachers to a warmer and holier zeal in the cause to which they have devoted themselves."

In reference to the meetings of teachers of individual schools, a letter from Dorchester remarks, "I regard these meetings as the main-spring of the system, as absolutely essential to its efficiency. I feel warranted in ascribing to them whatever of good has been produced, and it is upon them alone that I found the hope of continued and increasing good."

The indifference of parents is another topic touched upon by many, and the question "how can this be overcome?" stated with great earnestness. It is remarked with great truth, that we need the co-operation of those whose children are placed under our care; and it has been observed that in some places parents felt they were conferring a kindness on the school in sending their children, and thought but little of the instruction which their offspring were receiving. To obviate this state of things, two or three reports have suggested the propriety of having an anniversary celebration of the school, which parents are requested to attend; and we are assured, by those who have adopted this course, that much good has been experienced. A superintendent in this city, referring to a celebration of his own school, in which were an address, poem, and some original hymns, observes, "In this way a sympathy is excited between parents and teachers, by which the former are led to co-operate with the latter more fully at home; and by understanding the feelings of the teacher in relation to the great work of religious education, the parents are made more sensible of their

obligations to aid personally in the preparation of their children for the Sunday school. Nothing but good can flow from them, and their influence is especially important in the maintenance and improvement of these excellent institutions."

The want of a sufficient number of male teachers has been a complaint brought forward by many with whom we correspond, who are earnestly asking for a remedy to this want. The directors are aware that there is far too much indifference to the cause of Sunday schools among the young men of our community. Whether this arises from mere want of interest, or pride, (and yet this seems paradoxical — too proud to enlist in the service of the greatest Being ever on earth!) yet it is a state of things which cannot be remedied everywhere at one and the same time. We would, therefore, go on as we are, yet not without this hope, that the scholars may be so educated as to desire to become teachers as soon as the term of their pupilage is expired. With this view, the directors would suggest the continuance of the term of pupilage longer than is customary, so that there may be no break in our connexion with those who are now scholars, and hope at some future time to become teachers.

"While there is a deficiency of male teachers in our Sunday schools," says one of our correspondents, "there are many, very many young men in our city, who have the intelligence and capacity for the office of Sunday school teachers. Why do they not join us? is a question frequently asked. It is because they have not been brought to a sense of their duty; they are indifferent to the subject from habit. While they are thus indifferent to this and other great objects of benevolent enterprise of our times, they are themselves the greatest sufferers, and need the kind advice and admonition of a friend and teacher, as much, ay more, than many of our pupils: but arouse them to a sense of duty—make them feel and understand their true interests, and let them but perceive that a faithful discharge of duty is of paramount importance as regards their happiness, and that that duty consists in a proper use of the talent with which their Maker has endowed them—I say, let them but feel and understand this, and we shall not want for faithful and

intelligent teachers. This neglect and indifference, we apprehend, is a habit, and not the dictate of the heart.

"The following scene was witnessed but a short time since, and we believe it is not singular. A teacher called at a public house for a friend, on the Sabbath, whom he had invited to attend the school, where he saw several respectable young men, forming a circle round the fire in the bar-room, engaged in conversation altogether inconsistent with the sacredness of the day. Upon subsequent inquiry, it was found that this was usual with them during the hours of divine service. These young men are called respectable; but to what respect are they entitled? They do not respect the sabbath. They do not respect the institutions designed for the good of their fellow beings. They cannot respect their Creator, and therefore do not respect themselves. Can they be respectable? How much good might be accomplished if their attention could be arrested and their minds be directed to this subject, and thus be brought to reflect upon their duty."

A superintendent in this city has been obliged to place classes of boys under the charge of females, on account of the scarcity of male teachers; and this plan has been attended with happy results. "A better control has been exercised over the boys, and positive improvement is perceptible. We are convinced that many boys can be better governed under the care of an intelligent and energetic female, than under a male, even if his qualifications be of a high order. We would not make any suggestion that would in the least discourage any one from attempting this duty, nor would we paralyze his efforts in the least; but when there is a deficiency of male teachers, females may be profitably substituted."

The subject of manuals was introduced in another part of the report, but the following extract from a correspondent, may be appropriate at this place. Referring to Allen's Questions, the writer observes, "Mr A. deserves all praise for what he has done in the cause, but it is now more than six years since his work was published, and has not the business of instruction

made some progress amongst us? Is it not better understood now than it was then? If so, why should not the manuals keep pace with the age, and why should not the Sunday school class books share in the improvement which has taken place in other school books? Would it not be well to make some suggestion on the subject at your annual public meeting, so that the attention of those who have leisure and ability may be drawn to it."

The only remaining subject is that of libraries for children. As to those for teachers, all are in favor of them; but for children there is much doubt expressed, by more than one of our correspondents, as to their beneficial tendency. The directors would observe that in general they are thought a very great acquisition by the schools that possess them; but that many who thus write have not anticipated the objections of those who differ from them. A few extracts will therefore be laid before this society, that they may judge for themselves upon a subject of so much influence, good or bad, as the case may be.

A correspondent in this city writes, "Our library is another of the instruments for good; it is gratifying to witness the continued interest which is manifested in this part of our plan of operations. The practice of reading, continued thus from year to year, will not only form a taste for, and habit of reading, which to any child is an invaluable acquisition, but it must be a means also of imparting a great amount of knowledge, and at the same time leave so many indelible impressions for good, that it must influence the character, while the mind and memory endure."

A writer from Cambridgeport states, "The books from the library serve to give variety to the exercises, and we think a good selection of books of the first importance in every Sunday school. The scholars should be questioned in the books they have read, and frequently an opportunity will offer of illustrating truth, and enforcing duty. We regret that your society has discontinued the publication of books. It is difficult to procure enough books of the right character for our schools."

On the other hand, a letter from Springfield states, "the only change that we have made is that of closing the library, which

was done by general consent; it always embarrassed the teachers, and gave the children habits of reading which did them more harm than good."

This report will close with an extract from a superintendent's letter, of this city, in which he gives more fully his reasons for doing away the library in his own school.

After alluding to the confusion attendant on the distribution of books, and the time of the children wasted in making a selection, he proceeds, "These are not the principal reasons that influenced us: the children of our school are almost entirely members of families where books are plentiful; and, therefore, as the scholars are not dependent on our library, we did not feel it incumbent on us to sustain it, when so many difficulties arose from it. We doubt not with many the attractions of the library were the principal inducements to attend school; and we would put the question to teachers generally, if there be not reason to fear that the mind is more closely connected with the library than with the teachers or their instruction? Is there not a charm about the library which throws all else into the shade? We would not be understood to regret that there is this love of books, but we would not have them eclipse the more important instruction of the Sunday school."

With these remarks, and with feelings of gratitude that so many have aided us in our cause, and of hope that our schools will go on and prosper, this report is respectfully submitted.

In behalf of the Directors of the Sunday School Society.

F. H. GRAY, *Cor. Sec.*

The Anniversary meeting of the Sunday School Society was held in the Rev. Dr Channing's church, on Wednesday evening, May 25th, at which a large audience was present, and much interest was manifested. Rev. Dr Tuckerman, the President of the Society, in the chair. The meeting was opened with a very appropriate prayer, by Rev. Mr Kilton, and a hymn

was sung by the juvenile choir of the Warren Street Chapel, (Rev. Mr Barnard's) with much effect. The Annual Report was read by the Corresponding Secretary.

Rev. Mr Farley, of Providence, moved the acceptance of the report, and made some remarks on the subject of Sunday schools. He spoke of the report as showing the value of Sunday school institutions, and as affording encouragement in the great work. He considered these institutions as important to Christianity, as giving to the minds of the children a religious tendency, and awakening the finest sympathies of the heart. Friendships which were formed at Sunday schools, were different from friendships formed under other circumstances. These friendships were founded in the highest principles of our nature, and grow in purity and strength — they were not easily broken, but would endure through life. He also conceived the Sunday school to be one of the most important instruments for keeping alive a sense of religious obligation in a community. It also seemed to connect the parents with the teachers, the teachers with the pupils, and the pupils with each other — and all were thus bound together with the strongest ties of religious friendship.

The report was then accepted.

Mr Farley was followed by Mr Stebbins, of Cambridge, who presented the following resolution:

Resolved, *That the difficulties and discouragements in the way of the Sunday school teacher, are neither insurmountable nor disheartening.*

I esteem it a privilege, sir, to address this meeting, not because I expect to give much, if any, information upon this subject, but because I *feel* upon it, and the expression of those feelings gives me pleasure. I know, too, that sympathy is a strong incentive to action, and that a new voice, however feeble it may be, will be welcome in this cause. As the weary, exhausted traveller, disheartened and despairing, just ready to lay down by the way, in

utter hopelessness of ever attaining the end of his journey, starts with a lighter step and a brighter eye, if only a little child becomes his companion, so we, when engaged in any difficult enterprise, and nearly exhausted with previous effort, renew our labor with increased vigor if a new friend comes to our aid. My resolution implies that there are difficulties with which the Sunday school teacher meets: what are they? The great, perhaps the fundamental difficulty out of which most others spring, is the nature of the child's mind. Born into a world of sense, surrounded by objects of sense, and being engaged almost wholly in their investigation, the child has little ability, and less opportunity, for examining the unseen, the spiritual. His mind is not able to receive those truths which by long reflection have become familiar to us, and which we often very injudiciously attempt to force upon it. The duty of the teacher is to regulate this action of the mind, and through the seen and tangible, to introduce the unseen, the spiritual. To do this is a difficult task. Nothing, indeed, is more difficult than to lead the mind of the child to generalize, to deduce principles from actions — to combine events into causes and effects. To but very little extent can this be done. The sentiments of the child are its governing powers, its religious instinct is the guide of the child to correct action; and this spiritual power, this innate idea of duty, must be strengthened and moulded by the teacher. The adult *reasons* upon duty, the child *feels* it. The man contemplates the consequences of his actions to decide upon their correctness; the child instinctively perceives their rectitude. This is rendered still more difficult by the active and bustling disposition of the child. Change, variety, new objects, new thoughts, a rush of curiosity like that which burst upon Adam when he first opened his eyes upon Eden then fresh and fair from the hand of its Creator, are constantly forcing the mind from object to object, from thought to thought, so that the steadier gait of the mature mind cannot keep pace with it, much less trace the association of ideas by which things so distant and dissimilar could have been united. What teacher has not felt this, and how often have we been dis-

posed to rebuke this wild (so only to us) heedlessness of the mind? We must remember, however, that this is the way in which the child's mind acts; we must fly after, and explain as we can, as we go, and not attempt to chain down this bird of the skies in a cage of our own making. I do not mean to say, sir, that we should not check this propensity to discursiveness some, but we must not, nay *cannot* restrain it entirely. These difficulties, however, would soon be overcome by patience and faith. But how can the teacher exercise the one or possess the other? How often does he meet with cold looks and incredulous smiles from those who ought to know and do better. It comes down to us from men high in honor and office, that moral power can do nothing, is good for nothing in governing men. That they must be restrained by force, that the fear of the halter or bullet is the only safeguard of society; and this idea is returned in a thousand echos, till the teacher himself is half forced to believe it. But, sir, it is not true; it is a libel on humanity and its Author. What! have the motives of eternity, the bliss of heaven, the wo of hell, no power! Do they not exert an influence upon the mind of him who is tempted to wander from duty and virtue, as strong as that which binds yonder planet to the sun? Is it possible that the puny arm of frail man, as held out in the law, will restrain men from crime, when the imprecations of Heaven fail of doing it? No, sir, it cannot be; the records of criminal history tell us that the dagger and firebrand have often, very often, been laid aside, not through fear of the law, but through fear of him who seeth in the night as well as in the day. But what is the law but the manifestation of the common conscience of the community? It is an embodyment of the moral sense of society; it is founded on this; it must be founded on this, or all attempts at putting it in execution would be like attempting to stay the tide, as the mobing system now prevalent shows. This moral sense, this common conscience, it is the duty, nay, the privilege of the Sunday school teacher to develop and direct. Let us, then, take courage at the thought, and not despair in our labor.

But, sir, the teacher is discouraged because he does not see the result of his labors. He toils on for months, and sees no reform in those under his charge — he has had no reward. No reward? Has he not the approval of his conscience that he has done his duty? This alone is a great reward. But the truth communicated is not lost; it will eventually do its work. The farmer puts his seed into the cold bosom of the earth; the winter's storms, the hail, the sleet, the snow, cover it for months; at length the vernal sun causes it to germinate and bring forth fruit. So the instructions of the teacher may be powerless for a while; but eventually, in the silent hour of contemplation, after years have passed away, it will operate upon the soul like the leaven hidden in the meal. Let not the teacher halt in his duty because his class do not at once manifest a genuine spirit of christian obedience. And he will not, if he reflect upon the greatness of the work in which he is engaged. I heard it said from that desk, and so did many who hear me, that the noblest art was the art of forming splendid specimens of humanity. If it be so, and who will deny it, where on earth can you find a better place than this city in which to become distinguished? Here are many hundreds of poor and degraded children — if I am wrong, sir, you can correct me, — whose minds are to be moulded for good or ill. The happiness of our country depends upon the principles these and other children imbibe. Truly, then, it is an honor to engage in this work. Let us all, then, redouble our efforts to elevate the low and debased portion of our community. All can do something, many can do much. How can we go quietly to our beds, and lay our heads upon our pillows in peace, until we have engaged in this great cause of humanity, of God? My ardent prayer to God is that those noble spirits who are making such sacrifices for the benefit of the poor children in this city, may be rewarded here with a sense of duty fully discharged, and hereafter with life everlasting.

Mr E. S. Dixwell then rose and addressed the meeting, expressing his conviction of the importance of the interests which

are embraced by this association. He believed that the Sunday school, although not as effectual as rightly administered parental instruction, which ought to be the child's main dependence for his religion, was a means sanctioned and blessed by the Creator for the accomplishment of much good.

There was, he remarked, a view not before alluded to, in which it gave him great pleasure to contemplate these institutions. He loved to consider the Sunday school as a school for the teacher as well as the pupil. He was convinced that no teacher who fulfilled his duty to his class, could have failed to derive benefit from the connexion; and, therefore, ought to feel under as great obligations to his little friends, as they could be to him. If his young charge have shown minds docile, tractable, like the children whom our Saviour blessed, they have afforded him an illustration of the Saviour's doctrines of unspeakable value. If they have, under his affectionate admonitions, changed the aspect of the wandering eye and the averted face to the fixed gaze and features lighted with intelligence and interest, they have afforded him a subject of secret remembrance and contemplation so soothing, so intrinsically beautiful, as cannot have failed to touch his heart. If they have conversed with him, asked him questions, interspersed their attention with remarks, which have opened to his view the workings of their minds — and every good teacher will have elicited such things, — they have given him opportunities of gently bending their thoughts to good, for which he will not fail to be grateful to them.

But the remarks of children upon the subjects taught them in these schools, are not without direct and positive instruction to the teacher. He would venture the assertion that no teacher who has had experience enough to be a competent judge, has failed to gain some useful matter of religious instruction from his pupils. The minds of children, when really engaged upon religious or moral subjects, are peculiarly susceptible of feeling the truth. With these also is the influence upon the teacher of his own instructions, and his preparation for them. He is en-

gaged in learning and teaching the gospel of peace and love. He is immersed in it, as in the atmosphere whence he draws vitality, and which lends its own tints to the distant scenes of the future.

Mr D. then went on to show that the improvement of the teacher might have been predicted by reasoning *a priori;* and to appeal to the teachers in the association themselves, if their consciousness did not testify that this result had been realized.

He said, moreover, that this consideration is one of comfort to the teacher. We have been told on other occasions, with a solemnity almost appalling, of the fearful consequences of the influence of our characters and minds upon those we teach. And it was true that our coldness would not communicate heat, our indifference zeal, nor our want of principle produce by sympathy deep purposes of good. But while we retire not, after contemplating the great responsibility we have assumed, it is comfortable to know that the process which we use for the amelioration of others is producing the like effect upon ourselves; like the rubbing together of the green wood and the dry, both are warmed and kindled into the same flame.

He therefore asked permission to offer the following resolution:

Resolved, *That we consider the influence of the Sunday school to be of inestimable worth to the teacher as well as the pupil, by affording the means of great efficacy for forming influential and religious characters.*

Mr Alcott rose — he had not come there with any intention of speaking, nor had he any resolution to offer. But he was deeply interested in the subject of Sunday schools — spiritual culture — and had been for many years entirely devoted to the cultivation of children — *very young children.* He believed that this kind of culture was the right way of commencing education; that children were peculiarly adapted to it, and peculiarly alive to it; that no other kind of culture interested them so much. The difficulties in awakening and interesting them,

he thought, never laid in the child's mind; that always when there was any difficulty, it lay in the teacher's mind or method. We go to children, said he, to put into their minds something which is but collaterally connected with principles; or if we do speak of principles, we tell them not what we are the most deeply convinced of ourselves, or what interests us most deeply, but what we think ought to interest us, and what we ought to be convinced of, and ought to tell them. It is my idea that we should go to children not to teach opinions, but to converse with them on the principles and sentiments of their own nature. These principles and sentiments are Christianity. The adult finds these in the life of Jesus, having forgotten them amidst the worldliness of life; and thus refreshed in memory, goes to the yet fresh and uncontaminated child, and calls them out of his mind, and leads him to unfold them. Everything that the child has to learn, is within him. The elements of Christianity constitute his own nature. His soul is Christ. This becomes manifest the more simply the life of Jesus is presented to him; for everything within it responds to the various points of Christ's character.

If I should be asked what methods I should pursue, I should say, as has been before said this evening, that manuals should occupy a very subordinate place; that the living intercourse of conversation should be resorted to; that the facts of the life of Christ, the circumstances of his birth, so conformable to the ideal, his miracles, conversations, &c., should be brought up before them in familiar discourse, and they should be asked for their own impressions of these things, and to tell what they manifest of that spirit which is within themselves as well as within Jesus. They should be taught that all his circumstances, his conversation, his action, was the manifestation of a common nature, and thus led to understand Jesus through their own consciousness, and thus be taught to keep pure, or purify themselves, by the experience and life of Jesus. The teacher will find — I speak from experience, — that the children will think with liveliness and love on these subjects, and will suggest many valuable

thoughts to themselves, without our prepossessions and prejudices. General truths will often be developed in their minds by these facts and words of the life of Jesus. Conversations on the gospels of the life of Christ — this is the idea. He then went on to remark that he believed such teaching would develope a new class of evidences of Christianity, such as had never before been thought of, and which would consist in a manifestation of the adaptation of Christianity to the unsophisticated soul. With some enlargement of this idea, he closed.

Mr Mann then rose, with the following resolution:

Resolved, *That in this country and this age, greater blessings will flow from the moral and religious education of youth than in any other country, or in any past age, and greater evils will follow its neglect.*

The works of past ages, he said, have been those of a few individuals; the mass have been little better than domestic animals: having each their allotted service, and hemmed round by a wall, as it were, of ignorance, their desires have been limited, and they have easily been governed by brute force. But in this country and this age, the case is far otherwise; education is open to all, and with us mind must compete with mind for superiority, while resort to mere brute force is wholly impracticable.

When intellect thus contends with intellect, what is to control the actions of men? Nothing but a deep sense of moral and religious obligations; and these are more effectually, more deeply implanted in the mind in early years, in our Sunday schools, than in any other way. The teacher may reasonably experience great joy in forwarding this glorious result. This general idea was fully and strongly developed by Mr M., who enchained the attention of his audience to the end, by his forcible and eloquent train of remark.

The meeting was closed by singing the doxology, in which all the audience joined.

"From all that dwell below the skies."

*** In justice to one or two of the speakers on this interesting occasion, it is proper to observe that their remarks as now published, are very imperfectly reported, and given without their knowledge or concurrence.

THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER,

AND

CHILDREN'S FRIEND,

Will be issued on the 15th July. It will be continued monthly, containing 54 pages, large 18 mo., small type, at $1,50 per year, payable on the receipt of the second Number.

The matter will be furnished by practical Teachers in Boston and elsewhere, and a large part will be made interesting to children as well as Teachers.

Persons wishing to examine this work, may obtain the first No. gratis of the subscriber. B. H. GREENE.

THE

NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH

SKETCHES OF THE ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD ON THE

THIRTYFIRST OF MAY, 1837.

TO WHICH IS APPENDED

THE

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY.

5441.30

BOSTON:
WEEKS, JORDAN AND COMPANY.
121 Washington Street.
1837.

6895

C. A. Green, M. D.,

June 27, 1868

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY'S REPORT.

It is not to be expected that our annual reports should differ materially from each other in the topics treated: since those of any one year, being sent to the schools connected with us, furnish subjects of remark for the communications which we receive in the year following. Consequently we are obliged to introduce the same topics in our different reports more or less frequently. We hope to be gainers, rather than losers, by this course, inasmuch as it is better to have a few well-settled opinions on the prominent points of religious education, than to touch upon a great number, and leave them but partially discussed.

But, besides any new light, that may from time to time be thrown on subjects that have previously occupied our attention, we trust we shall always be able to offer hints for new plans, and greater facilities in communicating Christian truth. During the past year, several letters and reports have been forwarded to our foreign correspondents. We have not thus far received any replies. We are gratified, however, to be able to state that the Rev. Mr Wood from London, who has visited this country since our last report, has informed us that the schools, with which we correspond, feel a deep interest in our welfare. They are encouraged by the sympathy we express with them, and with all interested in the same holy cause.

The first subject to be brought forward, is a sermon lately delivered before this Society by the Rev. Dr Channing. It was preached in the Federal Street

Church, in February last, at the request of the Directors. In it the subjects relating to Sunday schools were discussed in all their bearings. Having been printed and laid before the public, a repetition, at this time would be unnecessary. We shall, however, quote its opinions upon the *manner* in which Christianity is to be taught.

"The Gospels are to be the study of the Sunday school teacher, and of all who teach the young. The great object of study must be to penetrate to the spirit of these divine writings, and above all to comprehend the spirit, character, purpose, motives, love of Jesus Christ. He is to be the great study. In him, his religion is revealed as no where else. Much attention is now properly given by teachers to what may be called the letter of the Gospels; to the geography of the country where Christ lived; to the customs to which he refers; to the state of society which surrounded him. This knowledge is of great utility. We should strive to learn the circumstances in which Jesus was placed, and lived, as thoroughly as those of our own times. We should study the men, among whom he lived, their opinions and passions, their hopes, and expectations, the sects who hated and opposed him, and the superstitions which prevailed among the learned and the multitude. Strive to see all things as vividly as if we lived at the moment of Christ's ministry. But all this knowledge is to be gained not for its own sake, but as a means of bringing us near to Jesus, of letting us see into the secrets of his mind, of revealing to us his spirit, and character, and of bringing out the full purpose and import of all he did, and said. It is only by knowing the people, among whom he was born and brought up, and lived and died, that we can fully comprehend the originality, strength, and dignity of his character, his unborrowed self-subsisting excellence, his miraculous love. We have very few of us a conception how Jesus stood alone, in the age in which he lived, how unsustained he was in his great work,

how he found not one mind to comprehend his own, not one friend to sympathize with his great purpose, how every outward influence withstood him. And, for want of this conception, we do not regard Jesus with the interest which his character should inspire."

The parts of the Gospel, which the Sunday School teacher should most study, are those which need no great elucidation from criticism. The parables, the miracles, the actions, the suffering, the prayers, the tears of Jesus, and these are to be studied that the teacher may learn the spirit and the soul of Christ; may come near to that wonderful being; may learn the great purpose to which he was devoted, the affections which overflowed his heart, the expansiveness of his love, the profoundness of his wisdom, the unconquerable strength of his trust in God. The exposition of the Christian Virtues in all the volumes of all ages are cold and dark, compared with the genial light and warm coloring in which Christ's character sets before us the spirit of his religion, the perfection of our nature."

One more quotation from this discourse. "There are two great subjects on which it is very desirable to give to the young, all the light they can receive, — human nature and human life; and on these points the Gospels furnish occasions of much useful teaching. They give us not only the life and character of Christ, but place him before us amidst human beings and human affairs. Peter, the ardent, the confident, the false, the penitent Peter! The affectionate John! The treacherous Judas selling his master for silver! Mary the mother at the Cross, Mary Magdalen at the Tomb, the woman, who had been a sinner, bathing his feet with tears, and wiping them with the hair of her head. What revelations of the human soul are these! what depths of our nature do they lay open. It is a remarkable fact that the great masters of painting have drawn their chief subjects from the New Testament. So full is this volume of the most powerful and touch-

ing exhibitions of human nature; and how much instruction does this book convey in regard to life as well as in regard to the soul."

The reports, received this year, have been less numerous than usual. The interest however in those schools which have reported themselves is not at all diminished; in some, new classes of adults have been formed from twenty to sixty years of age; in many, Bible classes have been formed, which serve to retain in the schools those pupils, who feel too old to remain as common scholars. We shall quote one or two extracts from different reports, without reference to order, but simply to display the interest manifested in the cause of Sunday schools.

"We hope," says a Superintendent in this city, "the Society will not flag in its efforts. We trust the schools will promptly and cheerfully sustain their connection: we want,—we must have sympathy, and interest, and zeal tempered with knowledge, if we would be successful teachers: if we would advance the important work. And this must be sought, can be obtained best by the action of mind upon mind,—heart upon heart, in our social teachers' meetings, and in the more general meetings and efforts of this society. Our school is continued with two sessions each Sabbath through the year. We think great injury would result from an interruption to this plan. We would do nothing to weaken the interest of either pupil or teacher, by any relaxation of those constant efforts so needful to our success. Our pupils have increased from the 250 reported last year as belonging to the school, to 300. We had last year 41 teachers connected with our school—we now have 47.

We have lately, at our teachers' meeting, discussed the relative advantages of the two systems of teaching. Viz.: that of giving separate and different lessons to the different pupils of the same class, and having separate recitations: or of engaging the attention of the whole class, at the same time, in the same lesson. A

decided preference was given to the latter system, which is practised by nine-tenths of our teachers. The disadvantage of the first named method is, that while one member of the class only is engaged with the teacher, the remaining portion is apt to be unengaged and uninterested. In the latter, sympathy thrills from heart to heart; a deeper interest in holy truth is awakened. We do not hesitate to declare our conviction, that if we would be successful teachers, we should adopt the latter mode of teaching."

We have a pleasant letter from Brighton. "In 1834, our school numbered about 50 scholars. A general apathy seemed to pervade the minds of many in regard to the utility of Sunday schools. It is believed that this arose not so much from any adverse feeling among Parents and Children, as from a want of united effort on the part of the teachers. There was some difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of well qualified instructers, and the few that were engaged, although devoted to the cause, were doubtful whether the result would be in any degree commensurate with their wishes. Although partially disheartened, we resolved to persevere in our efforts, believing that a cause of so much usefulness to the rising generation, should not be abandoned, while a gloom of hope remained. Such exertions were made on the part of the teachers to awaken an interest in the society as the exigency required, and it was found that a proper spirit existed to support the school, if the energies of those most zealous were exerted in harmonious and judicious action. In 1835, the school increased to 80 scholars and 16 teachers. In 1836, to a still greater number. We now have 125 scholars and 22 teachers."

"A social communication has been opened between Brighton and some of the Boston Sunday schools, by way of letter-writing, and some small presents exchanged which have had a good effect."

We quote now from a Superintendent in this city. "Our last report alluded to the subject of Bible Classes

as of great importance. We would again refer to it to say, that in addition to the class of young ladies, formed last year, we have now a class of young men, which promises great good. It seems to us that if one class is more useful than any other, it must be that which takes the pupil when just entering upon the busy scenes of life, a season when its temptations are more clamorous than at any other time, and the power of resistance the least vigorous. At this very period, the members of Bible classes are taken by the hand by a Christian friend and adviser, and are thus prevented from losing the religious associations of childhood. The period of strong temptation is safely passed, and the scale turned in favor of virtue and religion."

The next subject to be mentioned is a plan proposed for the immediate improvement of teachers, by a gentleman of this city. He thinks there are many instructers who know but little of the facts in the Bible which are of a local or temporary interest, and, consequently, in the explanation of some facts, they apply their own crude interpretations; thereby making the best of books an interpreter of their own thoughts and opinions, rather than a standard eternal and immovable, to which their own thoughts and opinions should be subjected and conformed. It is indeed true that there are many, who eschew all advice from manuals, geographies and histories, trusting only to what may be gained by self-examination and reflection. But to all this, to all the Christian virtues, is to be added knowledge, and it is for the advancement of knowledge that the plan referred to has been started. It has been proposed that the several schools of our denomination in this city should endeavor to raise, by subscription, among themselves, or in their respective parishes, the amount of one hundred dollars each. This money is then to be devoted to the purchase of a library for teachers, the books to be approved by competent individuals; and also to having occasional lectures which shall have this library as their end and aim;

pointing out the advantages of certain books, and the cases to which they are respectively applicable. This proposition has been made very recently, and has not yet been thought over by the Directors; but coming from an individual highly respected in the community, we lay it before you at this time, without comment of our own.

With regard to a library in our several schools, but little has been said by our correspondents. The wish for better class-books for the younger children is constantly pressed upon us, and it would be truly an advantage to all Sunday schools, if some individual would write such books as are appropriate. We know not of any complaint among the schools to be compared with that of the want of new books. It may be well to state at this place that two works have issued from the press during the past year, which we recommend to the teachers as an aid in their work. They are *The Sunday School Teacher and Children's Friend*,—a monthly publication,—from which articles have been selected, as tracts, and published and distributed to the amount of 40,000; and *The Ministry of Jesus Christ*, a work recently published by Rev. Mr Fox, of Newburyport, suited for a class-book. Each of these works can be easily procured at the bookstores in this city.

Much has been said heretofore, about confusion in the distribution of books as an argument for doing away with the library. But this trouble may be remedied by adopting the course pursued at the Purchase Street School. The teachers believed that books given out oftener than once a month would make the privilege too common and render many indifferent to the subject. They therefore divided their school into four equal sections, each section to take books in turn. On every Sabbath, immediately after the devotional exercises, the librarian collects the books distributed on the preceding Sabbath, and discharges the account of each pupil from his record. He then gives a slip of paper and a catalogue to the teacher of

each class that is to receive books. The teacher consulting the pupils, selects two books for each individual, and against their initials marks the numbers of the books chosen. The librarian then collects the papers and catalogues, selects the first numbered books, if in the library at the time, and if not, the second, records them in his book, and places them together in class-piles. After church, those who are to receive books, return to their seats in school. A few teachers attend, and in one or two minutes the books are distributed, and the children quietly dismissed.

In our circular we asked if any advantage was obtained in discontinuing the schools for a portion of the year; a practice adopted by many, where the population is scattered over a wide extent of country. We quote from a single letter, which contains all that is said in favor of the practice by those who pursue it.

Referring to an uninterrupted session, our Walpole correspondent writes, "It will not succeed in the country: others with whom I have conversed are of the same opinion. We gave it a fair trial and continued it, summer and winter, for five years. But for four months at least, it presented a mere skeleton. In summer the school consisted of 140 scholars, and in winter there may possibly be 30. The distance, state of the roads, and the severity of the weather are insuperable difficulties with the children, and even with many of the adults in the quiet attendance at the sanctuary. It is next to impossible to keep up the interest of the school, when the attendance is thus interrupted and irregular. The teachers grow weary and discouraged. Many of the class-books are mislaid or lost before the return of spring; and then there is a difficulty in reorganizing the school with fragments of classes, and inspiring skeletons with fresh life and vigor. The children who have remained will be as unwilling to go back and join their former class-mates, as they will be that others should be advanced to their ranks. Even if this were practicable it would not be proper. By suspending the school for five months, we secure a full and regular at-

tendance of instructers and children, prevent lassitude and inattention, and commence with greater spirit and better hopes. These hopes are never disappointed. The children are always anxious to have the school commence again."

There are many schools, however, in favor of an uninterrupted session. "Our practice has been," says a correspondent, "to continue without cessation, and this chiefly on the ground, that at the most a very small portion of the year is left us to carry on a work of such vital importance to the young. When we consider how great a portion of time is devoted to the day-school and the play-ground, how little attention is paid by parents generally to any thing like a systematic course of religious education, and how large a deduction is to be made from the 52 Sundays on account of sickness, bad weather, and other incidental causes, we are inclined to advocate an increase rather than a diminution of time. By an intermission a loss is sustained by all, inasmuch as we cannot find the mind of the pupil at the precise point where we left it."

Our Watertown correspondent writes, "The last winter we continued our school for the first time, and I believe every one is pleased with our success. It certainly keeps the subject alive and affords much instruction to those who are able to attend. There are some who cannot enjoy the benefit of this course, but this is no argument against others enjoying the advantages resulting from a lively interest manifested on the part of the teachers. From the results of my own experience in two schools, I feel bound to urge, on every suitable occasion the importance of a Sabbath school in the winter. I find others agree with me in the opinion that the amount of attendance at church is much increased by this arrangement."

A friend at Concord in this State, writes "For two or three winters past the school has not been closed. During this time, the number and regularity of attendance has increased. The greatest number of scholars

present at any one time during the summer was 181; the least 76. The greatest in winter 121; the least 76. The attendance was more punctual in the winter, than in the summer. If there is no Sunday school in the winter, the classes are all broken up, the scholars lose all connexion with their teachers and much of interest in the school; and it becomes almost as difficult to collect them again as at the first time. Besides, most of the people and children from remote parts of the town, remain at noon, and if not engaged in religious instruction will be in danger of spending the time in a way to counteract rather than to aid the other services of the day. So important has the manner of spending the intermission been considered, that it has been proposed that the adults who remain in the church should form themselves into classes for mutual instruction and improvement. This certainly would be a more pleasant as well as more profitable way of spending the hour of intermission, than to spend it in secular and trifling conversation, or to sit in silence. On the whole our teachers are decidedly of opinion, from reason and experience, to keep the school open during the winter."

All the letters received from those who discontinue their school in winter, show that there is no lack of interest on the part of the teachers which causes the suspension of exercises. They seem anxious, very anxious to do all in their power to advance the institutions of morality and religion, and nothing but convictions of duty seem to actuate them.

One subject more. As there are many into whose hands this report may fall, who know but little of the society, it may not be out of place to state who are the members, and in what way they became such. By reference to our Constitution, it will be seen that every teacher, in our denomination, becomes a member by virtue of his connexion with the school to which he belongs. All others, not connected in this way, become members by the annual subscription of one dollar. The society greatly appreciates both of these class-

es. Without the former it could not exist. The latter encourages us by their sympathy and enables us to aid, in a pecuniary way, those who apply for assistance.

It occasionally comes to the knowledge of the directors, that many schools are prevented from going into operation solely from the want of books. It would not be rash to say that the good effected in starting a single school would be incalculable, when the minds of teachers and pupils are anxious for mutual improvement and lack the outward means. If souls are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, shall we deny them spiritual food? Could the society be better employed than in supplying their wants. The amount now collected is just sufficient to meet the expenses of the society: any that may hereafter be subscribed will be directed to assist those in need of the privileges we so richly enjoy. A place has been offered and accepted at the Literary Rooms, in which all books are thankfully received, and forwarded to those in need. This arrangement will do much good. But the books thus incidentally received may not be exactly appropriate to the schools that apply. There are many schools which have hymn-books and manuals occasionally printed for themselves, and by having money at our disposal, we shall be enabled to have several copies struck off at a low price for distribution. We trust that all will consider this matter, and add many names to our list of subscribers. Any who are willing thus to aid may have their names entered, by sending them to the Secretary.

In concluding, the Directors would state that the society as such, is greatly appreciated. Our correspondents seem to take pleasure in responding to us, and frequently assert it as their deep conviction that our association is productive of great good. During the year quarterly meetings of the Society have been held; and the last report has been printed to the amount of 1500 copies and distributed among our various correspondents. In behalf of the Directors,

F. H. GRAY, *Secretary.*

ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

The Annual Meeting of the Sunday School Society was held in the Rev. Dr Channing's Church, on Wednesday evening, May 31st. The house was filled at an early hour. In the absence of the President, Rev. Joseph Allen, one of the Vice Presidents, took the Chair at 7 1-2 o'clock. The services were commenced by an appropriate prayer by the Rev. Cazneau Palfrey; after which, the above report was read by the Corresponding Secretary. Mr Allen in presenting the report for the acceptance of the meeting, made some forcible remarks from the chair, on the present condition of Sunday schools, in contrast with their state and prospects at the formation of this association; he dwelt for a moment on the objects of the meeting, as necessary to awaken sympathy among those who were laboring together in a cause of the highest importance to the welfare of society, and closed with an invitation to all who were present, to offer such remarks as their feelings might suggest, and the occasion required.

Rev. N. Whitman, of Wilton, (N. H.) moved the acceptance of the Report, with some remarks of a pertinent and interesting character. We regret that we are unable to give even an outline of them. His object appeard to be to encourage the teachers and friends of Sunday schools. He enforced with sound argument the two positions, that Sunday schools could accomplish the *end* which they proposed; and, would be a valuable aid to the church in her work of regeneration. He looked with a grateful heart upon the labors of the Sunday school, and felt that humanity had cause for rejoicing in the formation of such an institution. His motion having been seconded the report was accepted.

Rev. J. V. Himes, of the Christian Society of Boston, offered the following resolution:

"Resolved, *That the Sunday school is the offspring of Divine Providence, and a powerful auxiliary to the church in her work of renovating the world.*"

The positions contained in this resolution were supported by Mr H. with no little earnestness and power. He traced the origin and progress of Sunday schools, and saw in them traces of God's overruling providence too plainly to be misunderstood. Provision had been made under the Old Covenant for the religious education of the young; and it was still more clearly revealed and required under the New. When Jesus took little children in his arms and blessed them, it was a direction to his disciples to invite them to the reception of his Gospel; and when we were commanded to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," it was a provision which required the aid of the Sunday school; and in this, he saw clearly that it was the offspring of Divine Providence.

Mr H. then went on to prove his second proposition, that the school was a powerful auxiliary to the church in her work of renovating the world. His aim was to impress the CHURCH with her responsibility in regard to this weighty matter—the renovation of the world. The church was to do this, and she was able to accomplish it. But she must begin with the young. It was through them, as educated by the influences of the church, as exerted by the Sunday school, that instruments were to be raised up who should go forth in the true missionary spirit and reform the world. Then would the merchant imbibe this spirit, and leave his commerce to engage in this greater enterprise. The judge on the bench would feel its energy, and yield of his talents and influence to aid in this great work of renovation. Every class would be ready to favor and advance it, until it should be gloriously and fully accomplished.

He reproved with a fearless spirit the coldness, apathy and indifference of those who having the influence,

the wealth and the learning sufficient to effect it, were yet backward in promoting the spiritual redemption of man.

We regret our inability to give a more full account of this eloquent and stirring address.

Mr W. A. Weeks, of Boston, one of the Superintendents of the New North S. S., seconded the resolution, and urged its adoption. Mr W. said, Although I would gladly sit still and learn of those who are older, and more experienced than myself in this good work, I cannot refrain from uttering my cordial amen to the resolution which has been offered by my friend who has just sat down. I like the spirit which the resolution and the remarks offered, breathe. They are in accordance with the wants of the times. It seems to me that a new era is dawning on us—I believe this era will date from these anniversaries,—an era when man shall love his neighbor as himself,—an era when all our free and glorious land shall hear the word spoken in its purity—when all men shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. These walls have scarce ceased to echo the thrilling eloquence which fell on our ears last evening before our great Association, and the hearts of those whom we look to as our guides in spiritual things are yet warm with their deliberations on the same subject which this resolution embraces—THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT, this spirit which shall sustain the church, the spirit of spreading this good news, these glad tidings, wherever sin and sorrow are to be found. And I believe, sir, we have now begun at the right point—I believe that in the hearts of the YOUNG, in the Sabbath school, by the side of the faithful Sunday school teacher, and at our home's altar-fires is the good seed of this spirit to be planted, watered, cherished. The old, those of the present generation, have seemingly given up their hearts too long and too devotedly to the care of self and the heaping up of riches to feel keenly the *spiritual* wants of the great human family, —they have gone about the world too long, almost un-

heeding the tear of the mourner, or the longing of the weary soul for the bread of life;—but the young heart, that spirit just fresh from the hand of God! oh it is here that this heaven-sent spirit is to be planted,—here, while yet the young plant may be free from the tares which earth and its temptations may sow around it;—here let love be awakened—here let it be nurtured, till it overspread the whole being, and the sin-sick and the weary heart may repose beneath the refreshing shade it throws on all around it. Then shall the giant, the beautiful West, and the desolate places of earth, learn these glad tidings, and they who have bent with their fathers at these New England shrines, they whose hearts have warmed with the same holy voices as our own, shall again bend at a shrine of their own rearing; and amid the wide spread branches of their waving forest trees, shall rise the blessed spire of the village church!

But in order to effect this, we must have *sympathy*, and this is what I wish to talk about for a few minutes. We want the sympathy of the PASTOR. I know that to a great extent we have much of their cordial aid and sympathy; but I think no one will admit that this is as general as it should be. We would that the pastor should think of the Sunday school as a place in which *he* is interested—that he is the pastor of the *child* as well as the parent;—we would that he should come to our circle, and while the young hearts of childhood are fresh and pure and open to good impressions, that he should aid the teacher in making that heart a glorious temple for the Almighty to dwell in,—that he should twine their young affections around *him*, that they may look to him as their loving friend, and delight to walk in the ways of pleasantness and peace which he has pointed out. Come to us, then, Christian minister, and cheer us onward in the work in which so many are engaged.

Mr W. remarked in this connexion on the great danger of laymen requiring too much from their pastors;

but he believed the experience of all would prove that this mingling with the young of their charge and with their teachers was a recreation, a relief from their other labors, rather than an additional burden. He also remarked on the importance of pastors aiding the teacher by speaking of the school in families and in the pulpit, as he believed that when a pastor took no notice of the school, spoke coldly of it from the desk, or in families, the people imagined he cared little about it,—and governed themselves accordingly.

Again said Mr W., we want the sympathy of PARENTS. We wish them to feel that the Sunday school teacher is interested in the young being around whom their hearts cling with all a parent's love. We would have the parent take his little one by the hand and come with us to our Sabbath gathering; we would have him sit down amid one of our little groups, and while his bosom warms with love for his own child, let that love be imparted to others,—let the high and holy truths which swell within his own breast flow out into other hearts. I know it is said by some that the teacher may usurp the sacred place in the child's affections which a parent only should fill. If you believe this, Christian parent, if you have one fear that the teacher shall rob you of one sweet tone of affection, one respectful, filial feeling, I beg of you, come to our place of meeting, and judge for yourself—take no one's word for it,—judge us not by report; we demand it of you, in justice to yourself and the teacher, that you should remove this feeling from your mind. Almost the first lesson we teach the child is a love and respect for its parents; and if there be any one lesson more often and more warmly dwelt upon than another, it is, "honor thy father and thy mother." No, fear not that your child shall cease to respect and love you from the effect of his Sabbath-day lesson! Fear not that home's altar-fires shall burn less vividly, fear not that the heavenly tie which binds together parent and child shall be weakened by the teachings of the Sunday

school! Who does not know, who does not feel in the unworldly recesses of his heart the sweet recollections that linger around that loved word, *home!* Who does not bear the holy tie which dwells in that mother's prayer at the little bedside! Well has it been said,

> "I can forget her melting prayer
> When leaping pulses madly fly,
> But in the still, unbroken air
> Her gentle tones come stealing by. * * *
> And age, and sin, and manhood flee,
> And leave me at my mother's knee."

But it is said, Our children are instructed at home, and they need not the aid of the Sunday school teacher. Grant that the child *is* instructed at home; can it do him harm if the parents receive *aid* in this good work? Will it do the child harm if he find *many* whom he loves trying to teach him the same pure lesson of love to God and his fellows? Will it not be like a new ray of sunshine or a new summer shower to the tender plant?—But, beside all this, you are teaching your *child* a lesson of disinterestedness and love for all mankind—you tell *him* how his example affects his neighbor. Can *you* not learn something from this lesson? How does your example affect your next door neighbor in this matter? Does he not catch the spirit of your action, and refrain from sending *his* child to the Sabbath school? Christian parent, you can aid and sympathize with the teacher by your *example;* reflect, I pray you, how far you may help him in his work, and aid him as your heart may dictate.

Again, we want the sympathy of young men and young women. We love the place of our pleasant Sabbath meeting: our heart's desire is, that they may love it too—that they may feel a love for doing good, and experience the joy of the faithful teacher when he sees the cause prospering in his hands. Mr W. closed by a few remarks on the necessity and importance of cordial co-operation among the younger portion of the

community, and of their engaging in Sabbath school teaching with a proper spirit; and also, that teachers should never speak of their employment as a *task*, when it should be regarded as a privilege and a source of delightful and pure enjoyment.

Rev. A. B. Muzzy, of Cambridgeport, followed, and remarked in substance as follows:

I cannot leave this meeting without expressing my deep sympathy in the efforts now making by our Sunday school teachers. They deserve the gratitude of my profession. And I cannot withhold the convictions of one mind and the feelings of one heart on that point. My brethren, I believe, will join with me in saying, they have done a noble work. The gentleman, who preceded me, has appealed to us for our sympathy. We have not done, I fear, our whole duty in this respect—we have too often regarded our teachers as the only religious instructers of the children in their care. To them we have committed the education of these immortal spirits. But we do not ourselves part with the influence we have over these children, when they enter the Sunday school. The teachers are our allies and assistants. They hold up the arm with which we bear the ark of God.

And consider the circumstances under which they have engaged in this work. It was no office transmitted by their parents, coming to them clothed with approbation and honor. They commenced their labors in darkness and doubt. The field was untrodden and new; yet they have toiled on until their success is signal, and the public favor has become their deserved award. Let us not forget their claims on our gratitude. I cannot, I repeat, leave this meeting without a cordial testimony in behalf of these my friends and fellow-laborers in Christ.

Rev. Mr Palfrey, formerly of Washington, succeeded, and remarked, that he presumed one of the objects of the present meeting was, that the teachers might be

profited by hints and suggestions with regard to Sunday schools which might be turned to some practical account. He had listened with pleasure to the remarks that had been made;—they were encouraging and eloquent. He would however depart a little from the train of thought that had been pursued, and make some plain remarks—ask some plain questions—offer some plain hints—with regard to the duty of Sunday school teachers.

And he would ask at the outset, whether hitherto there had not been more *light* than *heat* in their instructions—whether the teachers' preparation for his peculiar duties did not consist more of *head*-work than *heart*-work? Such had seemed to him to be too generally the case. Teachers have made their preparation to consist in collecting together a quantity of facts to be poured into the minds of their class. There has been more *light* than *heat*. The object appeared too often to be to cultivate the intellect rather than the affections. This he regretted. The teacher should have a loftier aim. He has in charge immortal spirits. They should be pluming their wings for eternity—for heaven. Now, while their souls are fresh and buoyant, untainted by worldly cares and troubles, they should be laying the foundation of a character to last forever. They should be cultivating their religious affections. It is the teacher's duty to assist them in this. The loftiest aspirations should be kindled within them. The character of Christ should be presented before them with life and power for their model. The memory should not be too much taxed. Religion in all its bearings should be presented to the young mind, and that with a warmth of feeling—with an earnestness, and withal a simplicity—that shall carry conviction to the mind of the child. This can only be effected by the teacher, himself, feeling what he should inculcate. He must be a Christian. He must have studied with care the character of Christ. In him "he must live and move and have his being." His daily course must

be through the paths of wisdom—and the peace and pleasantness of that path shall be his holiest incentive: the wisdom there gathered his preparation—and thus prepared who shall limit the extent of his influence on the susceptible mind of the young child. To be a good Sunday school teacher, one must be a good man—one of lofty aim and principle — one who is a practical Christian. Such and such only is the elevated teacher. He feared there was not enough of this spirit—too few of such teachers. Some there were—blessed be God that such is the case. But are there not too many of a different kind? He would not needlessly censure—his object was not to pick out flaws—his spirit was not a fault-finding spirit. Perhaps after all he had better have been less positive. His only object however was the TRUTH.

Rev. E. T. TAYLOR then addressed the meeting quite at length, and with an eloquence peculiarly his own. He was very happy on this occasion, and his illustrations of the importance of early religious education, and the Sunday school as an instrument to accomplish this purpose, were original, at times amusing, and throughout deeply impressive. Jesus Christ, in his view, was the first Sunday school teacher; not Raikes, not the good Bishop of Milan; no, it was Jesus he said, when he took children in his arms and blessed them, and said, of such are the kingdom of heaven.

He gave a beautiful exposition of that passage in which our Saviour remarked, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you"—the idea however, is not, to be conveyed truly by any language of ours,—that Jesus had passed through this mansion, "and had left behind him all the doors wide open." The little children were on the lower floor, and it was for the Sunday school teacher to take them up one story after another, in the Saviour's train, until they were safe in the kingdom of heaven.

He spoke of the progress of the Redeemer's king-

dom, and of the universal diffusion of the true spirit of Christianity by the Sunday school; not that it was to take men from their various employments, as suggested by a previous speaker, but each was to feel it in the exercise of his own peculiar vocation. The merchant was not to leave his counter to be a Christian, but from thence was to be taken "right up into the kingdom of heaven." And so of the lawyer with his brief; and the farmer at the plough—"right up into the kingdom of heaven."

The natural feeling of religion in the heart was illustrated by an interesting and affecting anecdote. A child had been taught to repeat a prayer in the language of the book. A great deal of care had been bestowed by the parents in obtaining a repetition of it in the exact words in which it had been written. After the child was done it seemed to be dissatisfied of itself with a prayer thus formal and unfeeling, and in a few moments after, from the outgushings of its own little heart, it said, "Father, if I should die this night, be so good as to take me into the kingdom of heaven."

Another anecdote was given with striking effect. I have a little Greek boy, said he, under my care. He frequently walks abroad with me; and once on his return he remarked, I have always been struck with wonder and surprise when I have traversed your city, from one street to another, to see no soldiers—no police—no outward protection, and this so different from my own country. And yet, continued he, if you take with you a hundred dollars, you return with a hundred dollars safe in your pockets, and what is still better, with your head upon your shoulders. But I see how it is now—you have the Bible—you read the Bible—it is God's Book—and GOD IS YOUR SOLDIER—He is the sentinel on your battlements, and takes care of you both sleeping and waking! Mr T. added, that if the Sunday school was conducted as it should be, this remark of the Greek, comparatively so true now, would become a glorious reality.

But we do the eloquent speaker so much injustice in

attempting to give any portion of his remarks that we must desist. He closed in paying a well deserved tribute to the Superintendent, Mr Waterston, and teachers of the Sunday school, connected with the Bethel church, of which he is minister.

OFFICERS

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

ELECTED APRIL 26, 1837.

PRESIDENT.

Rev. JOS. TUCKERMAN, D. D.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

JOSIAH F. FLAGG, M. D., Boston.
HENRY WARE, Jr., D. D. Cambridge.
JOSEPH ALLEN, Rev., Northboro.
STEPHEN C. PHILLIPS, Salem.
WM. P. RICE, Cincinnati, O.
JNO. W. FOSTER, Portsmouth, N. H.
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CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

F. H. GRAY, M. D.

RECORDING SECRETARY.

ARTEMAS CARTER.

TREASURER.

LEWIS G. PRAY.

DELEGATES FROM SCHOOLS IN THE CITY,

Constituting part of the Direction.

George Forbes, Hancock School.
Samuel E. Sewall, Federal St. School.
Benj. Seaver, 12th Cong. School.
Wm. R. Sumner, Chauncey Place School.
H. B Townsend, Purchase St. School.
Geo. W. Bond, Brattle St. School.
Wm. P. Jarvis, South Cong. School.
Wm. A. Weeks, New North School.
Elijah Cobb, Howard School.
J. V. Himes, Rev., Christian School.
Otis Everett, Jr., Hollis St. School.
C. F. Barnard, Rev., Warren St. Chapel School.

CONSTITUTION.

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

ESTABLISHED APRIL 18, 1827.

ART. I. This Society shall be called the SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

ART. II. The officers of this Society, which shall be chosen by ballot, shall be a President, eight Vice Presidents, a Corresponding and a Recording Secretary, and a Treasurer. There shall also be a Standing Committee, consisting of a delegate from each Sunday school in the city connected with the Society; who may be chosen by the association of teachers to which they belong; or by the Society at its annual meeting; and this Committee with the above named officers who are residents, or when visitants in the city, shall constitute a Board of Directors.

ART. III. It shall be the duty of the President, and in his absence, of one of the Vice Presidents, to preside at all meetings of the Society, and of the Board of Directors.

ART. IV. The Corresponding Secretary shall attend to all the duties which the nature of his office requires; and shall be governed therein by the advice and directions, which may from time to time be given him by the Board of Directors.

ART. V. The Recording Secretary shall keep a fair record of the doings of the Society, and of the Board

of Directors, at their respective meetings: shall notify all such meetings in the manner which they shall determine; and in case of absence, shall cause the record book and all the necessary papers to be sent to the place of meetng in due season.

Art. VI. The Treasurer shall be required to keep a correct account of all moneys received or paid by him for the Society; and to make a report of the state of the Treasury annually, at the meeting of the Board of Directors next preceding the annual meeting of the Society.

Art. VII. It shall be required of each Sunday school connected with this Society, to furnish a report of its condition to the Corresponding Secretary previous to the public annual meeting of the Society in each year.

Art. VIII. The Board of Directors shall hold a meeting as often as once in three months, one of which shall be four weeks previous to the annual meeting of the Society, for the purpose of hearing the reports which may be rendered by the officers and schools of the Society; to appoint such other public meetings as they may deem expedient; to aid in the formation and encouragement of auxiliary societies and Sunday schools; to take measures for the publication of manuals, and other Juvenile Books; and for the transaction of all business relating to the pecuniary and prudential concerns of the Society.

Art. IX. There shall be an annual meeting of the Society on the last Wednesday of April, at 7 o'clock, P. M., for the election of officers, and for the transaction of other important business. The Society shall also convene annually on the last Wednesday in May, at some suitable place, to be determined by the Board of Directors, for the purpose of uniting in religious exercises, for the hearing of Reports, and for attending to all other communications or addresses on the subject of Sunday schools, which may then be offered by the members or friends of the institution.

ART. X. All members who are not Sunday school teachers, shall be considered as annual subscribers for the sum of one dollar. Sunday school teachers shall be considered as members of the Society, and become annual subscribers at their own option.

ART. XI. Any association of teachers who shall vote to become auxiliary to this Society, and notify the Corresponding Secretary of the same, shall be authorised to send one or more delegates to its meetings, who shall be entitled to all the privileges of membership, and shall receive the annual reports and other casual publications of the Society; and be required to furnish annually a report of the condition of the school to which they belong, agreeably to Art. VII.

ART. XII. This Constitution shall be subject to alteration or amendment, provided, that at any meeting of the Society, two-thirds of the members present shall give their votes in favor of such a measure, a notice of the proposed amendment having been given at a pevious meeting.

THE

TENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF THE ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD ON THE

THIRTIETH OF MAY, 1838.

BOSTON:
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1838.

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17 School Street

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

ANNUAL REPORT.

THE Directors of this Society present at this time their Tenth Annual Report. Their interest in the cause of Sunday Schools as individual institutions, as well as in this Society, as a means of aiding and encouraging those institutions, continues unabated.

The present time may be emphatically styled the age of societies. They are on our right hand and on our left, created for moral, political and religious purposes. Any good cause that suggests itself to the mind of an individual, immediately becomes the property of the community, and a body of men is at once organized to carry it forward. Originating for the most part with philantrophic individuals, the origin of our societies is necessarily good ; and yet it is not to be denied that there is much opposition to societies as such. The complaints are daily heard, that almsgiving is made the substitute for a charitable spirit : that the efficient members of any society are but few ; that many would withdraw from their alliance if they were compelled to do the work : in a word, that there is much real indifference to the prosperity of any society amongst the great body of its members : an indifference to which is attributed the thin attendance upon meetings held for the transaction of business,— showing any thing rather than a strong personal interest in the matter to which men have professed to devote themselves. Now these are grave charges, and may have some foundation in what we see and know to be the truth. It becomes us then carefully to ex-

amine and see how far they apply to ourselves,—how far if just, they can be removed from our doors.

We would remark, briefly, that our constitution is such that nearly every member must be an active member. Every Sunday School Teacher in our denomination is ex officio a member of our society, and these teachers constitute the great majority of our number. Others may unite with us by the annual subscription of one dollar ; a membership deserved and fully attained by this subscription ; a membership not calculated, we believe, to substitute almsgiving for a charitable spirit — because among other reasons the amount is collected in so quiet a way, that no feelings of ostentatious pride would prompt any to lend us a helping hand.

The Directors believe that much opposition is excited against Sunday Schools in consequence of the extravagant hopes and assertions of many of their warmest friends. The great interest felt in the education of the young has led many to ascribe to Sunday Schools a higher place than they deserve. They have in some instances been ranked above instruction from our pulpits and firesides in the great work of moral reform. But that they have not done all that was hoped of them is no solid objection to their existence. There was never an institution established that had not enthusiasts among its advocates. The first and great question is not "How far have they fulfilled their promises?" but " Shall they be continued or ended ?"— " are they productive of evil or good ?" This is the first question to be asked by those opposed to us, and by the answer given we are prepared to stand or fall. The question then, as to how far the promises of Sunday Schools have been fulfilled comes up for our consideration : and whatever answer be returned, whether favorable or otherwise, it will be the aim of the Directors to diffuse all the information in their power calculated to advance their best interests.

It is our opinion that much good is effected by distributing valuable information to many who are sincerely anxious for light upon the methods of instruction. There are corres-

pondents who repeatedly ask our opinion upon Libraries, Anniversaries, and Social Meetings :— individuals who have not tried them, but who are desirous of knowing how they have succeeded where they have been adopted — individuals who are unwilling to make any innovations, until satisfied that they are warranted by the experience of others. It gives us pleasure to quote in this connection from a letter of Mr Evans, one of Dr Carpenter's society, in Bristol (Eng.) approving our correspondence, and asking advice with a frankness and sincerity that admit of no misconstruction.

"I take up my pen with great pleasure to renew our annual intercourse, and very delightful is the feeling that we have such valued though unseen friends on the other side of the Atlantic, who are following the same pursuits and are actuated by the same motives with ourselves. I am glad to hear that other Unitarian Societies are maintaining a correspondence with you, and I trust we long shall continue the friendly contest as to who shall carry on our important work most zealously ; and who shall strike out the most efficient plans for its increased usefulness. Your Report is of great interest : the more so to us, as you speak so kindly of our correspondence. The extracts from your various Societies are of more than common interest, and I trust you will not consider me wrong, if I venture to comment on two or three points of especial importance."

The letter from which this extract was taken, reached us about a week after our annual report of 1837 was submitted. Since that time copies of the report with a letter have been sent out, but by some misfortune they have failed to reach the hands of our valuable correspondent, who again writes urging us by all means to continue our intercourse. "I am again requested by the teachers of our Sunday Schools to write to you in their behalf, and to express their anxious hope, that although from some cause or other, no letter or report was received from you the last year ;—you nevertheless have no intention of giving up your foreign correspondence. We think it well worth maintaining, were it

only on account of the encouragement thus afforded us in our labors. But, far more than this do we value it, believing as we do that much useful information is thus derived, and many errors in practice corrected by thus communicating our plans and experience. We are not therefore willing to believe that it is otherwise than from accident, that we have not heard from you in reply to our last letter, and under this impreesion we venture to send you one more, which will probably reach you prior to your annual meeting." The writer then proceeds to state his opinions upon Anniversaries, Libraries, systems of Reward, and Teacher's Meetings, some of which will be mentioned in the subsequent portions of this report.

It may be expected of us to state in this place the number of Schools, Teachers and Pupils now existing in this country. This however we are unable to do for two reasons : one that our communications are not answered regularly,— some schools reporting themselves, once only in four or five years, others not at all. The other reason is that our circulars often fail of their destination in consequence of the frequent removals of our clergy from one parish to another. We find, however, annexed to our report of 1834 a list which enables us to make the following statement. At that time, reports had been received from 133 schools, containing 13,190 pupils and 2256 teachers; making an average of 103 scholars and 18 teachers in each school. The number existing now must be greater, for we have in no instance heard that a school has been discontinued, while several reports have reached us from schools commenced since the period referred to. The schools heard from during the past year average 203 scholars to 30 teachers.

We have stated in the introduction of this report that too much was expected of Sunday Schools by some individuals. Consequently there is occasional disappointment and discouragement, tending to drive some to the other extreme, viz. : the belief that they do no good at all. We would therefore urge our friends to be careful against all exaggera-

tion, confident and desirous that the truth alone should prevail. We cannot refrain from introducing to your notice an account of the school at Cambridge, which though it complains a little of a lack of enthusiasm, shows the school to be in an enviable condition. "Our school may be said to be in a prosperous condition. There is no very intense interest manifested by the children, though they seem attached to the school and to the teachers. Nor is there any excess of enthusiasm on the part of the teachers. Perhaps it is a fault with us that we have not quite enough of this, but what interest there is, and there exists probably as much as in most schools, is steady and uniform. We have many experienced and faithful teachers. And while on the one hand, we are not very enthusiastic, on the other, there is apparently none of the discontent and dissatisfaction, impatience and complaint, which are the frequent characteristics of faithless teachers. In this noble cause, teachers must be content to toil many years, perhaps a whole life, without seeing much fruit of their labors; or else they will often experience disappointment, and have the noble vigor of their resolution impaired. Our teachers, I think, take a sober and rational view of the case, and entertain no sanguine expectations of immediate visible results. They believe that if the fruits of their labors in this cause do not appear in the present life, in a form which they can observe and understand, they will most assuredly appear with the power of virtue, and the great glory of ransomed souls in the life to come. They seem content therefore to labor in the faith, that if they cast their bread upon the waters, they will find it after many days."

We cheerfully insert the following encouraging paragraph from one of our friends; encouraging because it shows that the success of every school depends mainly upon the teachers. "If Sunday School Teachers reflect seriously, they will see that the success of their great and philanthropic enterprise rests almost entirely with themselves; and if they wish to secure interest and punctuality on the part of their scholars, they should be interested and

punctual themselves; or they have no right to expect it from those they have undertaken to teach. Besides, it affords little satisfaction to those scholars who feel an interest in the exercises, and who have spent some of their leisure hours in the week in preparing for the Sabbath, to find on going to school that their teacher is not present, nor any other person to supply their teacher's place. Their classmates may be there, but having no one to instruct them, they pass their time in restlessness, impatient for the time when they shall be released from their irksome confinement, disappointed and disheartened they can hardly help feeling that their teacher has but little interest in them or the school. A child looks for a practical illustration of those precepts, which are held up to it as the rule and guide of life, and if they do not see this in those who undertake to instruct them, it must certainly lead them to be somewhat skeptical with regard to their importance, if it does not lead to an entire disbelief of them. Let a child once see that the lives of those, who are its guides or counsellors, are not in harmony with the precepts they inculcate, and you will find their influence on that child impaired, if not entirely destroyed."

The use of manuals is a theme on which we have always remarked in our reports, and on which a great many of our friends comment in their communications. We have heretofore quoted these circumstances without expressing in a decided manner our own opinions. We are ready however, to confess ourselves advocates for their use. We believe them useful to teachers and pupils. To the teachers they are generally considered indispensable. Every worthy instructer is willing to receive new light into his mind from whatever source it may come. He will consult many works upon his lesson, whether that lesson be an explanation of scripture, or the statement of his own mind. There are no two minds so much alike that they can receive no assistance, the one from the other. But as the objections apply to the use of manuals by pupils, we will look for a moment at the effects upon them. We are per-

suaded that it is a most important object that they should have some religious studies and occupations at home, and that in these studies and occupations they should have some guide and arrangement. The oldest classes will be better employed on the sabbath, if they have some fixed and stated object of pursuit laid down for them than left to pursue their own judgment. They will certainly receive a deeper impression of what is taught, and become more interested, if they first give their attention to their lessons at home by themselves, than if they meet their teacher under no responsibility for an acquaintance with the subject to which they are to devote themselves. All are more disposed to attend to a subject upon which they have already bestowed some thought, and to comprehend which they have already made some preparation. If this be true of the oldest classes, it applies equally to all. Perhaps it will be replied that each teacher can mark out a course for himself and his pupils — that he can draw from his own resources a plan of instruction, by which, without the use of text books, he might himself communicate a valuable course of religious instruction, and direct his pupils in their studies and reflections, when separated in such a manner that they shall all contribute to one great end, the sincere piety of those interested. We wish that all our teachers were possessed of such a portion of "knowledge and grace" that they could accomplish this effectually. It is the end, the only end at which we aim ; but means must be used to reach this end. Without manuals we believe few are so gifted as to succeed as well as with their use. Besides, we believe it of no trifling importance for a child to be able to retrace his steps that he may see how he came to entertain his present opinions ; of no trifling importance that the young teacher should have a salutary check to prevent him from useless digression,— a salutary aid to call his own mind more fully into action. Let us not forget the origin of our manuals, made for the most part, by men of intelligence and worth, the results of the reflection and experience of individuals interested in arriving at the best method of re-

ligious instruction. In some cases written by men of eminent piety, in others formed and approved by associations met for the purpose. In all laying down a more regular systematic course than could be planned by one in a hundred of our teachers.

In advocating the use of manuals, we by no means intend to confine our teachers and pupils to a mere form of question and answer — to require a repetition of words, without asking if they be understood by the child. This disclaimer may be thought puerile, but yet we cannot help the belief that many opposed to the use of class-books dislike them because they think them thus used. Our correspondent from Bristol has some good views upon the use of text books as assistants in education. "We pursue the plan of leading our children to think and understand clearly, and I believe much improvement is taking place in English Sunday Schools generally. Too true it is that the old system of having words and hymns and chapters by rote only is even now very common, but I certainly believe that men's eyes are opening fast to the evils of such systems, and many judicious works are now published for teachers and scholars, which must banish many of the abuses, which have led some to doubt the utility of the Sunday School."

The use of libraries in our schools has been thought by some to be of questionable advantage. This fact has been stated in one or more of our previous reports, and has induced several of our correspondents to urge their value strongly. Some have done this by showing the great attraction which they add to the school: others by showing how the great confusion so much complained of may be avoided. The plan adopted by the school in Purchase St. seems to be well worthy of our regard. It was published in our last year's report, but many that have not heard it stated, will probably be glad to have it repeated.

"The teachers believed that books given out oftener than once a month would make the privilege too common and render many indifferent to the subject. They therefore

divided the school into four equal sections, each section to take books in turn. On every sabbath, immediately after the devotional exercises, the librarian collects the books distributed on the preceding Sabbath and discharges the account of each pupil from his record. He then gives a slip of paper and a catalogue to the the teacher of each class that is to receive books. The teacher consulting the pupils, selects two books for each individual, and against their initials marks the numbers of the books chosen. The librarian collects the papers and catalogues, selects the first numbered books, if in at the time, and if not, the second; records them in his book and places them together in class-piles. After church those who are to receive books return to their seats in school. A few teachers attend, and in one or two minutes the books are distributed, and the children quietly dismissed."

Our Bristol correspondent expresses himself strongly in favor of libraries. "We have long maintained a library here with success and benefit, and I was glad to see that you brought nothing forward to prove them injurious in themselves. By giving out the books at a fixed hour, before the commencement of school, and forbidding their use during school hours, I believe that we avoid all evils and gain great good. Among the parents of our children who are all poor, the library books are much valued, and often a message is brought that "father wishes to have the book a little longer to read himself." I agree with your correspondent that they are an attraction to the school. But perhaps the objection, if it be one, is counterbalanced by the fact that it is one of our worst forms of punishment to take away a library book : a gentle, yet often an efficient correction. But I confess I think we must offer some attraction. It is true that the poor are often glad to send their children to the Sunday School to gain instruction, but I wish to bring them voluntarily and gladly. They cannot enter into the higher motives for embracing every opportunity of gaining knowledge, and I am therefore an advocate for offering some privilege (I do not consider it a

bribe) to those who join the Sunday School, which comes home to the youthful understanding; I again repeat, the use of these books at home is of great service.

We will close this notice of libraries with stating that we are decidedly in favor of their use ; and with the hope that many who have closed them will imitate the example of the New North School in this city, the report of which contains the following words. " We have lately had an addition to our library, which has for a long time been closed, and from mature reflection we have concluded to re-open it : believing that if properly managed, it will greatly increase the interest of our school and be of essential service to the scholars."

Social meetings of teachers is a subject frequently mentioned by us ; they have uniformly been commended in our previous reports ; and it would be unnecessary to bring up the subject again, were it not for the purpose of stating that many schools have gained great assistance by the more uniform attendance of the pastors upon these meetings. We believe that the interest of ministers in their Sunday Schools is greatly on the increase : at least, we are so informed in a decided manner, by several of our correspondents, while we have no communications of an opposite character to counterbalance them. The advantage or disadvantage of these meetings depends on the manner in which they are conducted. Where no preparation is made little good can be effected : but by following some systematic course, which shall tend to enlighten our understanding while it interests our feelings, we believe them productive of much good.

" We cannot refrain from expressing our grateful acknowledgments," says a writer from Charlestown, " to our esteemed pastor for his unremitted labors in behalf of those connected with this school. His efforts have been constant and untiring in pointing out the highest objects of Sunday School teaching ; and by these meetings of the pastor and teachers, an interest is awakened and kept alive, which sheds a happy influence throughout the whole

school. The opportunity of attending these meetings is universally improved, and if we may judge by the constancy and punctuality by which they are attended, we are led to believe that a strong interest is felt in them by all the teachers. Occasionally a part, or, if necessary, all the evening is spent upon subjects calculated to promote the character and objects of the school, in which all present can participate, and offer any suggestion they may think useful in promoting these ends. Usually we have some general exercise, such as reading the scriptures, and conversing upon them, or comparing one part of the bible with another, all of which is commented upon, illustrated and explained by our pastor, who presides at all our meetings. All have the liberty there as well as elsewhere, to call upon him for light upon any subject connected with their duty as teachers or members of the school. Through these meetings devoted teachers may add treasures to their minds, which will enable them to discharge their duty with greater confidence and hope of success."

We quote also from a communication sent by a school in this city, in which the pastor has become very much interested.

"We would make a few remarks on the influence which may be exerted by the pastor on the condition of the school to which his attention may be given. An occasional address—an hour passed with the children—a general interest in their concern may have an effect hardly seen and appreciated by those unacquainted with the human mind, and not conversant with its emotions. It may be thought by them enough if he expresses no disapproval: enough if he leave the management to those personally interested in the work of instruction. But it is not so. His conversation—the advice of one, to whom, in spiritual affairs, the eyes of many are turned—a suggestion from him in all matters of doubt will always be eagerly received; and the teacher sharing as it were his zeal, will pursue with more earnestness and confidence the path of pleasure and duty which lies before him.

"We have heard it remarked that many years ago, the children in some of our villages were called together on a week day to receive from their minister a lesson of instruction. We have also heard an expression of pleasure derived from it which years had not effaced from the memory. It was a scene of deep interest to the children."

The use of general lessons before the whole school is regarded by many of our friends as of great importance. They consist, for the most part, in making illustrations of the bible, with practical applications, or else in urging the duties of faith, patience and benevolence, with the other Christian virtues, one or more, according as their exercise has been called for by the course of God's providence. The death of a teacher often presents a suitable opportunity for directing the thoughts of the children to another world, bringing home more forcibly its reality, and stimulating them more effectually to their own necessary preparation. The commencement of summer, when the earth is pouring out her productions with so lavish a hand that the multitude forgets the Giver in his gifts, is an occasion to waken up thought relative to the vast processes going on around us ; gives a favorable opportunity to lead curiosity and admiration through nature to nature's God, — that what was originally but curiosity and admiration may be made the producers of reverence and love.

If any among us should be opposed to these general exercises, they might reply that the above-mentioned subjects are made the topics of remark with each individual teacher to his own class. We are glad to say we doubt not the truth of this assertion. Every faithful teacher will improve every opportunity of benefiting his pupils ; and these subjects should be brought up and meditated upon in our houses and churches, in public and private. They are subjects that should be brought forward at all times, and all places, when our feelings are warm and ready to receive the impression they are sent to make upon us. But they may be urged with great propriety where children may listen together, in the one case, to the thoughts suggested

by the loss of one in whom they have all felt an interest, one engaged in the same cause and place with themselves ; in the other, it seems well that the children should be directed together to every manifestation of God's goodness and care of which they in common partake.

Besides, we have seen that they add greatly to the attractions of a Sunday School ; and if this was the only advantage, we would still advocate their adoption. There is no use of denying that to some children the Sabbath is a tedious day ; that some would not come to our schools were the matter left to their own free choice, and we are therefore strongly in favor of anything that will make our places of instruction pleasant places. We would have all the religious exercises of children such as will be a pleasant resting place for their thoughts, — such as their memories will delight to dwell on. Experience has taught us that these lessons are calculated to produce these results ; and has shown us that the parents who have thus had an opportunity of knowing something that has been told their children, have carried out the matter at their own firesides, thus co-operating with and enforcing the lessons of the teachers.

These exercises given aloud to the whole school are the only portion of instruction to which the friends of the pupils can listen, and consequently where they are regularly given we might epxect a more constant attendance of the parents and guardians. This we find to be the case ; and we fully sympathize with the opinion of our correspondent in the following extract. " We cannot avoid in this connection the remark that we have been very glad to see among us the parents of those who are connected with our school. The effect must be good. When the vestry is nearly filled with the various classes engaged in the exercises of the evening, it is pleasant to see their friends and those most interested in their welfare anxious for a place, and adding to the zeal of the teachers, by their approval. Sometimes a slight confusion may be occasioned by the presence of so many persons, but any inconvenience of this kind is a thousand times compensated by the advantages resulting from

their attendance. We seem in this view to combine the method of Sunday School instruction with the social feelings of home : to be reminded of the days when this system not having been matured, the children were called together on the Sabbath afternoon, and gathering round their parents listened to their words of instruction. The presence of the father and mother, showing the interest each feels in the success of their child, exert sa happy influence ; and must recall to their own memories the pleasant days of youth when they received, although in a different manner, their lessons from the word of God.

The Directors would advocate the cultivation of music among our children, as an art calculated to increase devotional feeling, at the same time that it adds greatly to the pleasant associations we have with our Sunday Schools. Our Brattle Street School correspondent says on this subject. " There is so intimate a connection between the melody and the hymn, that when once familiar the association prevents the one and the other from being forgotten. Music forms a portion of one of our earliest and dearest pleasures ; and when it has as its companion words of devotion, the theme, before simple and beautiful, becomes sublime. We have observed a scene in the Sunday School showing the interest the children feel in the subject. The school to which I refer was called together in the morning and the afternoon, and although the exercises of the day were consequently prolonged, we were pleased to observe that before the school was opened, many of the younger scholars were met together, and were practising with apparent delight a number of tunes selected by one of the teachers. We had often heard music from more practised voices ; we had listened to deeper harmonies ; but seldom has the sound of music sunk more pleasantly on our hearts, than when those beautiful airs sung by many young voices fell upon our ears. The children never can forget the music and the words thus associated."

" We do not deem it necessary that a professional teacher of music should be employed. In the instance

just mentioned, a teacher of the school feeling that it might interest the scholars for their good and add to the pleasant associations of the Sunday School, called the children around him, and gave them instruction. We think, in every case, some one might be found willing and desirous to use his abilities for this purpose."

The annual celebration of individual schools has been mentioned in a previous report. These anniversaries are becoming more generally adopted, and it becomes us to state what opinion is entertained by our correspondents relative to their utility. Those meetings are celebrated in different ways. In some places a week-day afternoon is spent in innocent recreation, accompanied with religious services—addresses are made and hymns sung; which the children are said highly to enjoy. In others, exercises strictly religious are performed, upon the Sabbath, as a substitute for the usual exercises of the school; at which the parents and congregation generally are invited to be present, with a view to excite in them an interest in the welfare of the children, and the success of the school. With regard to the utility of these meetings, much has been said on both sides. Among those opposed stands our Bristol Correspondent, who fears that vanity and pride may be excited among the children. This objection we believe to have some foundation. At the present day forms are idolized: and with most individuals of all times the letter carries more weight than the spirit. We would not be understood to discard all forms. Far from it. We believe in their utility, and are always ready to lay hold of them as valuable assistants. But at the same time we would warn all against idolatry of forms. We would have individuals feel that nothing is worthily done that is not done from worthy motives. We would have children feel that going to a Sunday School does not redound greatly to their credit unless they go from a desire for improvement. We would not tell them repeatedly "how beautiful the sight of a Sunday School," but we would tell them "how beautiful the sight of virtue." We would have them told that Sunday Schools are of no value unless they are made to advance personal

holiness. Make Sunday School attendance, as is sometimes the case, the criterion of goodness, and you will do more harm than good. Your children will hear the utility of their Schools doubted till they will become themselves skeptics, and doubting whether or no there be any goodness. Make virtue the standard under which to rally, and no man can shake them from their allegiance. Make virtue the goal for which they must run, and no man's opinions can hinder them in their career.

Those of our correspondents who are opposed to these anniversaries speak theoretically, as none of them have introduced them into their own schools. Those who have adopted them speak warmly in their favor without a single exception. They agree in substance with the following opinion of our Taunton correspondent. "We always study to combine, easily and naturally, something in the way of religious or improving instruction with the festivities of the occasion, besides opening the church for a special Sunday School service in the evening. I find these meetings promotive of good feelings. They are always conducted in perfect order, despite of the bright buoyant spirits of the little groups gathered about me: and they are among the pleasantest yearly incidents in my ministry."

As there is a difference of opinion among our correspondents with regard to the propriety of these meetings, we think it a favorable topic for discussion by those interested in our welfare.

In behalf of the Directors,

F. H. GRAY,

Corresponding Secretary.

Boston, May 30, 1838.

ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

The tenth annual public meeting of the Sunday School Society, was held at the Berry Street Church (Dr. Channing's) on Wednesday evening at half past seven o'clock. Rev. Dr Tuckerman, the President of the Society, in the chair. After a few remarks from the venerable president, the exercises were commenced with an appropriate prayer by the Rev. Mr Hall of Providence. The annual report was read by Dr. F. H. Gray. The topics which were treated of in this interesting report were manuals, juvenile libraries, teachers' meetings, general lessons, music, and Sunday School celebrations. The schools in common with this society were represented to be in a flourishing and prosperous condition — and great activity of mind and feeling was indicated as existing among the friends of this institution. Exact statistical returns had not been received — but more than 130 schools had been reported to the secretary in connexion with the society, giving a total number of their pupils at about 13,500, with 2300 teachers. Their correspondence with societies in England exhibited a spirit of sympathy and co-operation in this good work, which met with a warm response from every heart.

The acceptance of the report was moved by Mr Judd of the Divinity School at Cambridge, who advocated his motion by some very original and eloquent remarks. He urged the importance and value of Sunday Schools on broad and general principles, as the last means which had been given us by Providence to reform our country, and redeem the world. The millenium hope, he said had always existed, and he believed that glorious period was to be accelerated and perfected by the instrumentality of Sunday Schools through the religious education of the young. This he proceeded to urge by many interesting considera-

tions. One idea he enforced with great success, viz : that a public religious education through these institutions would create a public religious sentiment, which did not now exist. At the present day our men in public life, and in the discussion of public measures, gave but little proof of their Christian feeling or character, which he illustrated by reference to our legislation in regard to the late difficulties with France. The want of true Christian principle on that occasion had well nigh brought our country to the verge of a destructive war. This, he said, would be otherwise when our Sunday School generations should come upon the stage of action. A public religious sentiment would then exist, and war, slavery, intemperance, and all the more general and public vices would be swept away, and the reign of peace and purity be extended over the earth.

He was followed by the Rev. F. T. Gray of this city, who spoke forcibly and feelingly in favor of these institutions, with which he had long been connected. He addressed himself to teachers, and gave them the right hand of fellowship, and the words of sympathy and encouragement. He spoke of the two great principles by which they should be guided — Love and Faith — as exhibited in the life and precepts of the holy Jesus, who was to be their constant study and model. He illustrated the power of these principles as he had seen them manifested in the closing moments both of teachers and children. The touching instances which had come under his own personal observation, some of which he related, gave a great value, in his view, to these institutions — and he encouraged the teachers to persevere in the good work in which they were engaged, and to consider the great responsibility of their situation as those who had the care of immortal souls.

Rev. C. F. Barnard then made some remarks on the providence of God as displayed in the establishment of most of the great philanthropic enterprises of the day, especially of the Sunday School. He closed with proposing a resolution, which being of a business character not immediately connected with the object of the meeting, was laid upon the table.

Rev. Mr Farley of Providence, then rose and expressed the thought that there might have been too much of mere indiscriminate panegyric lavished upon Sunday Schools; if however, said he, they had not, as he thought they had not, fulfilled all the hopes, or warranted the too unqualified representations of their too partial friends, they had exerted a most salutary and delightful influence in many cases, upon both the young and the old. He expressed a fear that parents had not done all they might or should, to obviate one of the earliest objections raised against the institution, viz: that it would tend to make them negligent of that more than angel office confided to them, that of training the immortal spirits of their offspring for the light and bliss of heaven. Parents did not sufficiently keep in mind the infinite solemnity of that trust which had been committed to them with the birth of every child. From these considerations he took occasion to enforce the truth, that parents were the natural teachers of their children, and insisted that they should never content themselves with getting their children ready for and sending them to the Sunday School, thinking they had thus performed their whole duty in their religious education; that while they should welcome the Sunday School as a most desirable auxiliary in this great work, they should never permit it to supersede the more precious nursery of home and home's affections, or remove from their bosoms the sense of their own responsibility "to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

He was succeeded by the Hon. Samuel Hoar of Concord, who rose to give his public attestation to the utility and great advantage of Sunday Schools. He enforced the idea that the character of every Sunday School depended upon the character of its teachers, and insisted upon the necessity of a high moral and religious standard with them, if they would benefit, rather than injure their pupils. If a teacher, said he, does nothing more than teach the literature of Christianity, the child will think that Christianity has nothing to recommend it but its literature;

but if the teacher feels and exhibits the power of its great truths in his precepts and example, the child too will feel and copy them.—This general idea was further illustrated and enforced by reference to the books prepared for the young, and placed in their Sunday School libraries.

Rev Dr. Nichols of Portland, rose for the same purpose, to bear his testimony in favor of these schools. At the period of their establishment he said he had doubts whether children were capable of being instructed in the principles and truths of our holy religion. But all these doubts had long since been removed. The fact of the great interest which uniformly characterised their manner on the return of the period for the re-opening of the school, was a sufficient proof of this. Such indeed was the degree of feeling which they manifested in his own school, that the teachers were incited by the children, rather than the children by the teachers. He called upon the older members of the community to engage in the business of these schools, and for all to deepen their sense of responsibleness, in relation to their adequate support.

Mr Morton of Plymouth, made a few remarks on the best means of inculcating in the minds of the young, the truths "once delivered to the saints." His idea seemed to be, to recommend that the community should return to the simplicity of habits and manners, living and dress, which characterised the apostles and earlier teachers of Christianity, if they would secure the best effects of teaching in Sunday Schools.

The Rev. Mr Taylor the friend of sailors and of Sunday Schools, indeed of every good word and work, brought the meeting to a close by some very original and striking remarks. He referred particularly to his own busy life, which took him so much from his home, that he was unable to give his own little lambs the religious instruction which they required; and he thanked God that the Sunday School was in existence to supply his omissions. He believed the world around him was equally busy. They were engaged in their merchandise, their stocks, their specula-

THE

ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF THE ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD ON THE

TWENTY-NINTH OF MAY, 1839.

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REPORT.

The Directors of the Sunday School Society congratulate the friends of this institution on the influence it continues to exert upon the great cause of religious education in our immediate community. This their eleventh Annual Report calls for devout acknowledgments of the goodness of that Being who sent his Son to renew and perpetuate the divine image in the soul of the child.

During the month of February last, by request of the Directors, a course of lectures on the subject of Sunday School instruction was delivered in the Federal Street Church. They were four in number.

Lecture 1. By Rev. Dr. Walker of Charlestown, on "the idea of God in the minds of children."

Lecture 2. By Rev. Mr. Thompson of Salem. Subject, "piety in children."

Lecture 3. By the Rev. Mr. Gannet of Boston. "Faith essential in all religious teaching."

Lecture 4. By Rev. Mr. Upham of Salem, on "the power, dangers and benefits of Sunday Schools."

These lectures were of a high order. They were given before large and attentive audiences, and evidently contributed much to the means of religious culture now furnished our Sunday School teachers.

To the several inquiries propounded in our circular, we have received numerous and full replies. They

give evidence of an increasing interest in the religious welfare of the young, and contain many valuable suggestions. It may be well to notice the answers of our correspondents briefly in the order of the questions.

1. "What interest do the parents of your scholars take in your Sunday School?"

From the minister of Louisville, Ky., we have received the following, among other remarks, in reply to this inquiry. "We can determine this point either by their visits to the school, by their expressions of opinion about it, or by the diligence with which they prepare and send their children. Were we to judge only by the first evidence, we should say that they took little interest, for they seldom appear in the school. But in conversation we often hear from them warm expressions of approbation. If we judge of the interest taken by parents from the growing attendance of the children, we have also reason to believe it an increasing interest. During the six years, for which our school has existed, the average attendance has steadily increased from twenty to sixty-two, the number now generally present."

Our Plymouth correspondent writes thus. "The disposition of the children to attend the re-organizing of the school in the spring, and the ardor and freshness with which they resume their exercises, it seems to us, is an evidence of the parents' interest in this mode of instruction. Besides, many parents are seen in the church during the opening of the school, and until the general lesson is given."

From Worcester we are told, "The parents are liberal in their contributions in behalf of the Sunday School. Those who are invited become teachers. A large proportion of them assist their children in preparing their lessons, and more or less are always present to witness the exercises of the school."

In South Hingham, an association has been formed for the support of the Sunday School. By the contribution of funds, and in the election of teachers, they afford much aid to the Sunday School. Heads of families are generally members of it, and thus manifest and strengthen their interest in the cause of religious education.

From the Warren Street school, we have the opinion that "a strong interest is felt in the school, especially where the children have kind, judicious and attentive teachers. This is the case even where parents are indifferent or sceptical upon religious subjects."

"I remember," says our Nashua correspondent, "visiting one man, who thought himself on his death-bed, who spoke very feelingly upon the delight his children took in the Sabbath School. He seemed to have been led to think of religion chiefly by reason of his children's interest in it."

2. "Does your school increase or diminish the direct efforts of the parents in the religious education of their children?"

On this topic there is great unanimity among our correspondents. It is admitted by one that "there may be a few instances in which the parents furnish less religious instruction in consequence of the Sunday School. But," he adds, "we think this evil is far outweighed by the benefit those children derive from the school, whose parents do not now, and who would not in any case, interest or trouble themselves much about the religious education of their children."

From the pastor in Leominster, we have a decided opinion, grounded on experience, of the good effects of the Sunday School on domestic instruction. He writes, "I know of many instances of this kind.

Last season, one father in particular took deep interest in the religious education of his children, and aided them much in learning their lessons, for the *first* time. I believe," he continues, "that a decided interest on the subject of religion has been produced among the parents by the instrumentality of the school."

Our Dublin correspondent speaking of his own school, says: "It is a rare thing for both the parents to remain indifferent to early religious instruction, while their children attend the school. Either the father or the mother becomes interested, and labors more faithfully and successfully at home."

In Keene, a committee of the teachers was chosen to ascertain, from minute examination, what effect their school was exerting on parental instruction. They reported that much more was done for the children at home than before the school was established. "It must be so," adds the writer, "or all philosophy is at fault, all facts are falsehoods."

From the report of the school in Brooklyn, N. Y. we quote as follows. "Our parents often go over their children's lessons once or twice with them. They bestow a great deal of care and supervision, which, without the invitation of the Sunday School, would not have been thought of. Thus order and system are given to Holy Time — the parents themselves taught — and a relation instituted, most blessed and promising, between the parent and child."

"The school," writes one, "reveals to parents the importance of the religious education of their children. It shows them the wants of the child's nature, and the necessity of meeting those wants."

We have strong testimony on this subject from a letter before cited. "Our school creates," says the writer, "a feeling of responsibility, which did not

before exist — and those parents who are the most faithful in the instruction of their children, express the strongest gratitude for the assistance rendered them by the Sabbath School."

With this accumulation of evidence before us, can we do other than decide that, for one case in which the Sunday School has shed a moral darkness, frosts and blight on the parental heart, there are thousands in which it has been the sun of heaven, warming into life germs of influence that had otherwise decayed and perished.

3. "Do your teachers hold regular meetings? Are they well attended? And what do you consider the effect of them?"

The replies to this question show that, as yet, a small proportion only of our schools enjoy the advantages of regular teachers' meetings. Wherever they are held and punctually attended, we are told, "they are the life and soul of the school." It is confidently affirmed by all who have proved their importance, that "no school can flourish without them."

From one we learn that their "teachers' meetings had been until within a year uninteresting and much neglected. For the last few months they have been held every week, are attended by nearly all the teachers, and some others who are not teachers, are looked forward to with expectation, and are sometimes protracted till late at night from the warmth of interest taken in the discussion. We attribute this change," adds the writer, "to two causes. First, the meetings are so frequent that the interest does not die away in the intervals. Second, that we occupy ourselves in a regular study of the Bible, a study which brings us in continual contact with most momentous and important truths."

The opinion comes to us from Northfield that "parents feel much more confidence in the teachers of their children, when they know that the teachers meet with their pastor, or for mutual aid."

The minister of Templeton writes, "that as their teachers are too much scattered to hold regular meetings, he is accustomed to substitute for them a third service on the Sabbath for the instruction and use of the teachers," and adds, "that an interest is manifested in these services not only by the teachers, but other portions of the parish."

Rev. Mr. Thomas, of Concord, N. H., remarks, that "since their teachers' meetings have been held on the Sabbath, the attendance is better than it was on week days. Where an exercise has been *prepared* for them by the pastor or superintendent," he adds, "we can plainly see the difference between the pupils of the teachers who do and those who do not attend the meetings. If they are held without order, preparation or head, they will soon languish, and the school with them."

Mr. Hall of Providence writes thus: "Beside the regular meetings which occur once a fortnight, when the pastor is present, our teachers have various meetings among themselves, forming little Bible classes or conversation classes, of which I have in mind three that meet every week. They do this of their own accord, and I see not how the effect can be other than good."

We cannot but regard the teachers' meetings as a vital part of the Sunday School system. The body may be sustained possibly without them, but instead of wearing the hue of health, it will be diseased, languid and pale. No school should rest content, we think, in the entire absence of this quickening power.

4. "Have you any teachers' library? If so, what are its advantages?"

We regret to say that, out of the unusually long list of our correspondents, we have intelligence of but five distinct teachers' libraries. The largest mentioned is that at Charlestown, which numbers about two hundred volumes, one half of which are books of reference, intended to aid teachers in the discharge of their duties. These books are used, we learn, to a considerable extent. But the opinion is expressed that there is great need among teachers of a full, clear and impartial commentary on the sacred Scriptures. The next library in size is that at Cambridgeport, which contains about one hundred volumes. "We deem it," says the superintendent of the school in that place, "of great importance. It consists principally of books explanatory of the Scriptures and works on religious education." Such a library has been formed the present season at Keene, and great good is anticipated from it. At Brooklyn, Conn., we are informed there is a small teachers' library. "It is advantageous," says our correspondent, "first, in preparing for teaching — secondly, in interesting teachers in their work." The teachers of the school in Wilton, N. H., are making inquiries as to books suitable for a library, with a view to establish one forthwith.

On a review of this topic, we cannot but express our hope that before another anniversary, many schools may be supplied with this invaluable aid to the teacher. Perhaps no class of books are now more liberally furnished by the press than works on education in general. From very many of these the teacher would derive new light, and be inspired with fresh zeal. Let the soul be a subject of much reading, and it will naturally become one of deep medita-

tion. The teacher must, indeed, possess "faith and virtue;" but unless he "add" to these "*knowledge*," he may sow the seeds of errors, whose rank growth shall at length overshadow and destroy the life-buds of childhood's piety.

5. "Is your school connected with any association of Sunday Schools, beside our own? What is your opinion of the expediency of county or other associations of this kind?"

Nearly all our correspondents express themselves favorably toward such associations. Two only, however, are reported as now in existence. From Keene we have this account of one of them. "Our school is connected with the Cheshire County Sunday School Society. We have two meetings annually, one in May and the other in October. Each time an address is delivered, extemporaneous remarks are made, &c. A report of the schools is made in the autumn. Eight or ten schools are connected in the society. Much benefit is produced by such associations. We are brought more into contact and harmony with each other; and new light and heat are elicited." This testimony is confirmed by other members of that association.

A pastor of the other society referred to writes thus. "Our association is connected with the 'Worcester Sunday School Association.' We have delightful meetings twice a year. I think that our association is the means of exciting great interest in the teachers and parents where the meetings are held. And they make a good moral holiday." "It is my opinion," says the clergyman of Warwick, "that good would arise in forming an association embracing the schools within the limits of our pastoral association. I have suggested the measure to my brethren, and hope we may carry it into effect."

We agree with one of our correspondents that "there is danger of setting too much machinery at work;" and that if we do, "the *water power* will not be sufficient to keep it in brisk motion." At the same time, it is our opinion that in the thinly populated portions of the country especially, an impulse is often given by the meetings of these associations, the want of which would be at once perceived, were they discontinued, where now prevalent. The sacrifice may be laid on the altar, but if no fire descend to kindle and consume it, it is a cold and vain oblation. And let us not forget that, although God sends his spirit from heaven, yet in these latter days, it operates only through human agency.

6. "To what extent does the prosperity of Sunday Schools depend on the sympathy and efforts of the clergy?"

A remarkable unanimity prevails through the replies to this question. From the Federal Street School we receive this answer. "Every year strengthens my persuasion that ministers ought to take a chief part in the management of their Sunday Schools. Generally speaking, the nature and value of the instruction given in a Sunday School will depend on the share which the minister takes in its direction." Our correspondent at Wayland writes that "the children, teachers, and parents watch the minister as they would a thermometer. If they find his sympathies verging towards the freezing point, they will look at each other, shiver, and call it cold weather, and perhaps disperse, every one to his own fireside."

From the flourishing school in the North Society, Salem, we learn that, "in their case, the very existence of the school was owing to the sole and unaided agency in the first place and the continued efforts of

their pastor. It was created and carried through great difficulties, when it was looked upon with more than suspicion, by many who are now its warm friends." This, though a striking instance of its kind, is by no means unsupported by others.

"When a stranger preaches," says one, "and makes no inquiries about the Sunday School, and says nothing to the children, there is a feeling of disappointment, and the exercises of the school are less animated and profitable. The best superintendents and teachers will be able," he continues, "to do more with the active aid and lively interest of the clergy; and in country parishes, it seems to me that no Sunday School can prosper without such aid and interest." "I have known several schools," writes another, "to languish, fail and die out, from the want of interest and energy in their pastors." The superintendent of the school at Lowell, says on this subject, "To the pastor parents look, as they should, for religious instruction; always for religious advice, and often for religious direction. Where a Sunday School is coldly looked upon, or even not warmly encouraged by the minister, it loses its principal hold upon the interest of the people, and becomes in a great degree languid and inefficient. Let the laity assist, encourage and strengthen with all their might, but I think that alone they can do nothing."

If these views are founded in truth, then is it manifest that no minister can safely commit the entire charge of his Sunday School even to the most competent teachers. The machinery may be never so perfect, but unless the whole power be let on, it will stand motionless. Let the teacher feel that his pastor cares nothing for the school, and how can he magnify his own office, or discharge fully its functions? And will not parents be very liable to regard

a religious institution toward which their minister, the fountain of religious instruction, looks with coldness or distrust, as of little importance? If we have doubts of the efficacy of the Sunday School in any parish, let us inquire whether it has yet had a fair trial, whether the exceeding weight of the pastor's influence has ever yet been thrown in the scale on its side?

7. "Do Sunday Schools increase or diminish the influence of pastors in the religious instruction of their people?"

An impression may have been made on some minds that the Sunday School was erecting a barrier between the minister and the young in his charge; that the affection which should rest upon him has been turned toward the teacher; or that the lessons of the Sunday School were such as to impede his usefulness as a teacher of Christianity. So far as the views of those acquainted with the practical operation of the system have been given in our present correspondence, they are decided in showing that the Sunday School often is and may always be made a new bond of interest and influence between pastor and people.

"Wherever the school prospers," says one, "the children form a medium of communication, a sort of sympathetic chain, between the pastor and the parents." "I feel," says another, "that I have done much more good in the ministry since a Sunday School has been connected with my society, than I did before." "In his parochial visits," remarks another, "it always affords an opening to speak of serious things, and to impress upon parents their peculiar obligations toward their children." "I have no stronger tie," writes a pastor, "with the people (not even the administering of the most sacred and

tender ordinances) than the Sunday School affords me. It has raised up a more interested body of hearers, and given me a new avenue to their confidence; and subjects of immediate interest are here suggested to me for my pulpit exercises."

A minister before quoted writes, "that of the twenty teachers now connected with his school, eighteen are members of his church, and twelve of them have joined it since they commenced teaching. A lady," he continues, "told me the other day that since her little boy has attended Sunday School, he has loved to go to church, listens to the sermon very attentively, and frequently tells her after church what it contained. Once when she asked him how he came to understand it, he said it was because he had heard the same thought explained in the Sunday School. I believe that several children have been converted to God through the influence of the school. I could give up anything rather than this."

From another we have the following language. "While pastors have the usual means of success as before, the Sunday School brings the whole body of the teachers into close contact with themselves. They are generally influential members of the parish — at least from influential families. He has rare opportunities to mould their characters, and thus to extend a religious influence among his hearers. Not only so — the teachers are instrumental in exciting attention in the scholars to the services of the minister. I have been sometimes surprised to hear large portions of my sermons repeated by children, whose attention had been awakened in this way."

But this institution is not necessarily an aid to the clergy. If they frown upon it, they may indeed deprive themselves of a large share of the service it had otherwise rendered them.

"Sunday Schools," writes one, "will diminish a pastor's influence, unless he joins with them. Then they will become powerful coadjutors. The school is the minister's right hand, without which he must work with crippled power." "If a Sunday School," says another, "can be efficiently sustained in any parish without the active and sympathetic co-operation of the pastor, his influence must grow less and less, as time advances. If he would retain and increase his influence with his people, he must meet the teachers frequently; — and he must, as often as possible, be present during a part or the whole of the exercises, and be actually, to a certain extent, a superintendent or teacher, making addresses to the whole school, or to separate classes, as circumstances may require."

"Sunday Schools," writes another, "increase the pastor's influence, *if he keeps them under his own control.* If not, they diminish it. I repeat it, the pastor should be considered the virtual, though not perhaps the nominal, superintendent of the school." From Washington we have very strong testimony on the importance of the Sunday School to the minister. "Much must depend on the degree of his own co-operation with it. If this is heartily given, he becomes connected in a most interesting relation with the teachers, and becomes more intimately known and personally looked up to by the pupils, than he would otherwise be. But even if he sets himself against the school, I scarcely think it *can* set itself against him."

In regard to the methods by which pastors can increase the interest in their schools, one gentleman remarks that "by more personal exertion out of the pulpit, the clergy would convince parents of the importance of Sunday Schools, as they cannot by ser-

mons alone." A clergyman speaks very strongly of the good effects of Sunday Schools on the labors and character of pastors. "In proportion," are his words, "as they engage in the school, become interested in helping the teachers, addressing the children, and awakening the feelings of parents toward the school, they *must* become more and more earnest for the religious instruction of their people generally. It is a matter of course. It comes of our nature and our religion. I am devoutly thankful, as far as regards my own mind and heart and any success of my efforts for my people, for the Sunday School and the increasing interest I have felt in it."

Such are the opinions on this topic, drawn from our various correspondents. They are here presented as to wise men. Let each judge of their truth and value.

It would give us much pleasure to notice at length several topics suggested by our correspondents in addition to those named in the circular. Among these stand prominently the importance of Bible classes, and the necessity of a new supply of books for the children, or a reprint of some of the old ones. On the first point we quote as follows: "We have a Bible class which is under my own care. One person, the last season, a man nearly seventy years of age, who was a member of this class, made a profession of religion. He assured me he had received great instruction and comfort in thus having the Bible explained — that it was a new book to him, and that he saw the things of religion in a new light — to use his own words, 'I feel that the scales have fallen from my eyes.'" Facts of this kind should not be lost on our religious community. This is one among many rich clusters of fruit that spring from the Sunday School.

A friend suggests the expediency of this society's appointing an agent to visit the several schools in the country, with a view to learning their condition, to promote their improvement, stimulate their exertions, encourage the friends of this institution, &c. There are schools in small societies which peculiarly need sympathy and co-operation of this kind; and in some societies a school does not exist, but might be established by the encouragement and aid of an agent. Another correspondent asks that if this society send an agent to his vicinity this season, the school in his charge may receive from him a visit. The visits of two or three gentlemen of this city to some of our country schools the last season, were attended with such happy results, as to give hope of great good accruing from an extension of such visits.

We sent, the last autumn, copies of our annual report, accompanied by letters, to several of our friends abroad. One answer only has as yet been received, which is from Rev. R. K. Philp of London. We regret that an official communication from the Secretary of that school, promised in this letter, did not reach us in season for the present report. Had not Mr. Philp told us of the fact, we could hardly believe that "many winters had shed their snows on his head." He writes with the enthusiasm of a young man. He speaks with much warmth in favor of annual festivals in Sunday Schools; "having," says he, "again and again witnessed the pleasure and happiness, and I hope the improvement, resulting from such social intercourse." He approves highly of the cultivation of sacred music in these schools. "But why not," he asks very properly, "teach it professionally and correctly? What is worth doing at all, is worth doing well."

We quote, as pertinent to the topics now reviewed,

the remarks of Mr. Philp in relation to the value of the Sunday School. "Of all the subjects that can occupy the thoughtful mind, infant training, youthful education is to me the most important. Archimedes is reported to have said, 'Give me a fulcrum on which to rest my lever, and I will lift the world.' I say here it is. The infant mind is that fulcrum. Education is the lever, which, through the divine blessing, can and *will* lift the world, not the world of matter on which Archimedes operated, but of mind, which is of far greater importance than a thousand material worlds."

To this language we cordially respond. May it be echoed from lip to lip and from heart to heart, until the earth shall be vocal with the sound. While the age is replete with physical improvements, and the material world subjugated to the almost omnipotent sway of man, let the spiritual receive a commensurate care. Let the laws of the soul be as profoundly studied as are the laws of mechanics. If man be anything higher and better than a clod of the valley, why should his nobler nature be thus not merely reduced to the level of, but placed as it often is, far below the body. We should contemplate the child as something more than a set of springs and devices to operate on the outward elements. If we do this, and if we give him that rank assigned him by the Saviour of the world, then shall we hail each ray of light on his spiritual culture as one of God's brightest emanations. The ascension command to that apostle, on whom was built the indestructible church of our Lord, will seem a personal charge to ourselves, "Feed my lambs."

In behalf of the Directors,

A. B. MUZZEY, *Cor. Sec.*

Boston, May 29, 1839.

ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The eleventh anniversary of the Sunday School Society was held at the Berry Street Church on Wednesday evening, May 29th. The President, Rev. Dr. Tuckerman, in the chair. The services were commenced with an appropriate and devout prayer by Rev. Dr. Kendall of Plymouth. The annual report was then read by Rev. A. B. Muzzey, of Cambridgeport, Corresponding Secretary of the Society. This very interesting document, compiled mostly from an extensive correspondence with all the Sunday Schools connected with the denomination, brought into view their concentrated opinions on the following subjects, viz. The interest which parents take in the success and support of the Sunday School; its influence to increase or diminish their direct efforts in the religious education of their children; teachers' meetings, and their effects; teachers' libraries, and their advantages; county associations of teachers, and their expediency; the efforts and sympathy of the clergy as necessary to the prosperity of these schools; and their effect to increase the influence of pastors in the religious instruction of their people. These, with a notice of a course of lectures given before the society last winter, by the Rev.

Messrs. Walker, Thompson, Gannett and Upham; the value of Bible classes; the call for an agent to visit distant and feeble schools; with extracts from the society's foreign correspondent, Rev. Mr. Philp, of London, made up the substance of this able report.

The acceptance of the report was moved by the Rev. Mr. THURSTON, of Windsor, Vt., who remarked that the sentiments contained in the report could not but cheer the heart of every friend to the institution. He was particularly pleased with the remarks it contained on the influence of Sunday Schools in regard to parental religious instruction. In former years, and on similar occasions, fears had been expressed, that the Sunday School would prove injurious in this respect. He rejoiced that now there was such a strong array of *facts* in proof that this opinion was unfounded and incorrect. Had it been otherwise he said he should have agreed with an expression in the report, 'that all philosophy was false, and all facts falsehood.' For as soon, he remarked, as the child enters the Sunday School, and receives instruction from a faithful teacher, the want is felt of more and more light on this interesting subject. As you increase the interest of the child, you increase the interest of the parent. The child would naturally call the attention of its parents to its lessons; it would seek their aid continually in learning and understanding them; and by this means parents were insensibly but certainly led to feel the necessity and obligation of imparting this instruction to their children, in addition to the aid which they were receiving from their teachers at the Sunday School.

It was said in the report, that the effect of Sunday Schools was certain to increase the influence of the pastor in his religious instructions from the pulpit.

On the same principle it was equally certain that parental influence was increased, and their exertions redoubled, by the attendance of their children on the instructions of the Sunday School.

Let us then go on, he said. It is an important work, — and it can be done. A missionary spirit, it had been said, was earnestly desired amongst us. Here then is a work which requires the missionary spirit, and it is a field in which every one can engage. It is the most glorious of missionary fields. It is practical. We may speculate, but speculation alone is not enough. We must labor. Here is a field where we can put our speculations, and the instructions we receive on the Sabbath, into immediate and useful practice. If we would impress upon the community a character for good, we must begin with the children. We may by this means train up a generation who shall be worthy of the Christian name, and who shall work out for themselves and their race the noblest results.

Rev. Mr. Osgood, of Nashua, N. H., followed, and addressed the meeting as follows:

I am very happy, Mr. President, to succeed our brother from the Green Mountains, and second his motion for the acceptance of the report. I am glad of the opportunity to say a few words upon the principles of that report. I like its tone. Its statements are not vague and exaggerated, like so much that has been said and written upon Sunday Schools; they are specific and judicious. In listening to many speeches, that have been made upon this subject, and in reading the many extravagant eulogiums that have been passed upon Sunday Schools, one might be almost warranted in saying upon this mode of instruction what the poet said of virtue —

——— "I would that we all practised it, and
So, God willing, might hear nobody talk of it more."

But if we consider the subject in the spirit of the report, we shall bring to it the right kind of enthusiasm; not that enthusiasm which makes a great hurrah about the glory of the enterprise, without being at all acquainted with the obstacles that lie in the way of success, but that better enthusiasm, that true christian zeal, which, while it is aware of the difficulties that beset its pathway, is yet determined to press on to its aim in spite of all hindrance. Then we shall speak in such way that words will not be mere words, but will lead to actions; and profiting by the light of past experience, strengthened by the sympathies of this occasion, we shall go forth to our several spheres of action, resolved to do what in us lies for the religious education of the young.

I would gladly remark, Mr. President, upon the various topics, considered in the report, but must confine myself to a single one. I will consider this single question. "Is the teaching in our Sunday Schools effectual?" In answering this question, we shall answer at the same time several of the questions, that are treated in the report.

Is teaching effectual, then it follows of course, that parents will be interested in the Sunday School. If teaching is effectual it will of course be interesting to the children, and what interests the children will interest the parents. If the child comes home from school, with his eye bright with the pleasure of happy affections, his face radiant with a sense of the truths, that have been illustrated by the teacher, the parent will see all this, and will never be indifferent to the institution which is of such profit to his offspring.

Is teaching effectual, then will the parents feel more interest in the religious education of their chil-

dren. They will not neglect it, as many think, and leave the whole to the teacher. The great reason why parents are so negligent of the education of their children, is because they feel little or no interest in religion at all: and the least interest exerted will inspire more; if their children talk of religious subjects, and ask questions, they will lead the minds of parents to religion, and thus the Sunday School will be, as it often has been, a means of a more assiduous family culture of the religious sentiment. Thus the more religious instruction there is, the more there will be, and the scripture will be exemplified, "to him that hath shall be given."

Is teaching effectual, then the minister will gain influence in his society, and he need not fear that any teacher or superintendent will estrange the hearts of the young lambs of his flock, from their rightful shepherd. All that interests the young in religion must extend the influence of the minister of religion. The more hearts there are who love religion, the heartier will be the response with which the preacher's voice is welcomed, the more and the stronger will be the hands that are zealous to support the altar of worship.

Now, Mr. President, let us ask whether teaching in the Sabbath Schools is effectual. There are probably few, if any, who deny that Sabbath School instruction has accomplished much. There are probably few who think it has done what it should, or so much as has been claimed for it. We ought not to hide from our sight the many obstacles in the way of efficient religious instruction.

The great sin of this age consists in mistaking words for realities. Because there are more words or more printed words now, we are apt to think we are wiser than our fathers, and to look back upon their

time with pity, forgetting that there was less danger then than now of mistaking words for ideas, because then men learned more from experience and the real discipline of life than from books. Now we are very apt to suppose that there is more religion at present, from the mere fact that more is said of it and more teaching is given. But we must take care lest we deceive ourselves, and think the young are becoming religious, merely because they listen to and read so much about religion. Is the instruction given to them vital instruction? Does it come from the heart and go to the heart? If not, it avails little. It may even do hurt by familiarizing the young mind with the sublimities of Scripture and the solemnities of worship, by that kind of familiarity that brings contempt with it. Many a mind, that has been led through book after book of religious instruction has gained as little real knowledge of religion, as the keel of a vessel, that is wafted from a foreign shore, gains of the wonders of the ocean which it has crossed: it gains nothing but a hard coat of barnacles.

Now the only way to avoid this evil is found in vital teaching. In whatever is of real and living interest to us, familiarity can never bring contempt and indifference. The child who is well instructed in the truths of the gospel will no more look upon them with coldness because they are familiar, than the kind parent will look upon the familiar faces of his fireside with disgust, because he has seen them so often, and the same affectionate voices have so often given him the welcome home. That there is much of teaching in our schools, that has not this vital character, cannot be denied — that there is much of merely formal instruction — much of the dead utterance of words of manuals — much of parrot-like re-

peating of catechisms and Sscripture — much neglect of duty on the part of teachers and much indifference in scholars.

Now where shall the reformation begin? The reply is very easy, and I am happy to make it in presence of our brethren, the clergy. It must begin with the clergy. It is their business to take the lead in all that concerns religious instruction, without asking themselves whether each action comes within the prescribed routine of ministerial labor. Least of all should they allow any to bear the office that is rightly theirs, of taking the lead in the religious education of the rising hope of the church, the young of their flock. Not only is it their office to lead in this thing, but they can best do it. Perhaps their more particular work lies in the instruction of the teachers. And certainly ministers should deem it a privilege to have a regular opportunity to impart religious and theological knowledge to that most interesting portion of the flock, the youth, upon whom the office of teaching usually devolves. I was surprised to hear from the report how many of our clergy neglect to hold teachers' meetings. Is it because they think their teachers are enough acquainted with religious subjects? How can they think so? There is, as the least inquiry will show, a singular lack of clear and systematic knowledge of religion and theology even among many of the intelligent portions of our people — little knowledge of the Scriptures, little acquaintance with doctrinal theology, nor any too much religion of the heart. Now the teachers' meeting gives a noble opportunity to the minister to impart knowledge and kindle zeal in regard to these subjects. Here the Scriptures may be explained with more interest than in the great congregation, because the hearers are those who are expecting to teach what

they learn. Here theological information may be imparted in a familiar way, and often with much more clearness and satisfaction than from the pulpit. Here too, personal religion may be kindled in the animated circle ; social feeling may give life to religious love, and in turn be hallowed by the solemnity of religion ; and hearts more warmed with piety under the private roof, than in the great congregation.

Teachers' meetings are apt indeed to be dull. Why so ? Partly because of the teachers, quite as much on account of the ministers. Teachers do not contribute their part — they do not talk enough. They have either a false modesty or indifference. Indifference is culpable. That modesty is very false that shrinks from duty. The teacher may say, he comes to learn of the minister, and not to teach. But how can he learn, unless he show some interest in what is going on ? The truth is, the teacher is too much ashamed of his ignorance to learn. Few questions are asked of the minister, and he does not know what information is needed. Let teachers be willing to show their ignorance, and soon these meetings will assume a new interest, as in many cases they have done. I think it was John Locke, who, when asked how, in the midst of so much occupation, he contrived to acquire such various information, said it was by never being ashamed of his ignorance. Would people be of the like mind upon religious subjects, religious intercourse between minister and teacher and people would be wondrously improved.

So far from regarding attendance at the teachers' meeting as a hardship, the minister ought rather to deem it one of the best means of improving himself. Here he may talk freely upon religious subjects ; and pour out his thoughts and feelings without reserve. If he bring a confident spirit to the work, he will

often find himself warmed by his theme, far more than in the usual course of his pulpit discourses. He will not only find that his ideas flow with more warmth, but often shew a more spiritual and exalted character than the elaborate productions of his study. Here he may learn to preach familiarly and to the heart. He can learn to avoid that cold and artificial manner that is the ruin of so many preachers, who speak to the people without the least apparent sympathy, and whose sermons, if they are not always above the heads of the people, certainly do not reach their hearts.

I ought to stop my remarks here, I am aware, Mr. President. But with your leave, I will touch upon one more point in connection with what has already been said. I would say a word as to the bearing of our views of theology upon the religious education of the young. Our view of human nature and of the attributes of God is such, of course, as especially to encourage the efforts of the teacher in addressing young minds. But there is one peculiarity of our denomination that is less favorable to religious instruction. We stand at the extreme of protestantism —leaving the Quakers out of the account, we stand at the very extreme. We deny all human authority in matters of religion, and therein we justly glory. But we also show a strong tendency to give up, or neglect, the outward parts of religion, especially the ordinances of the church. There is a great deal said about spirituality, and this is well, for there cannot be too much spirituality. But many seem to think a proper spirituality inconsistent with a regard to the outward forms of religion; and thus those observances that make religion visible to the eye, and impress the mind through the senses, are often slighted in our churches. How many of us have cause to

mourn, that our own earlier years are so barren in interesting religious associations. How fondly memory lingers around the few occasions of especial interest that have occurred in our childhood; some funeral, in which the voice of the preacher spoke in tones that quickened in us the immortal hope—some baptism, in which the significance of this beautiful rite was touchingly manifest—some sacrament, at which the pastor's words and the solemnity of the occasion brought new meaning to our knowledge of the Saviour, and the wonders of his dying love were realized as never before. The mind of childhood is peculiarly sensuous and alive to outward impressions, and, therefore, more care should be taken to win its attention by engaging services. Even our adult congregations may complain of the barren nature of our public worship, and wish for more to kindle devotion than our churches present—our churches, where there is not so much as a cross to remind us of the Saviour. I was much touched by the beauty of the simple service at the Warren street Chapel, this afternoon. On either side the pulpit a vase of flowers charmed the eye by their beauty, and conveyed their lesson to the mind. They were a worthy confession of faith. They taught the love of God. They declared that the rose of Eden still blooms, and God has neither cursed nature nor the human soul. When I think of the too common tendency to neglect outward forms, and to disparage even the simple and touching ritual of our protestant faith, I am strongly reminded of what Martin Luther said of the men of his day, whose cry about spirituality was so obtrusive. "The devil himself," he says, "opens his large mouth, and roars out spirit! spirit! spirit! destroying the while all roads, bridges, scaling-ladders, and paths, by which spirit can enter:

namely, the visible order established by God in holy baptism, in outward forms, and in his own word. They would have you mount the clouds and ride the winds, telling you neither how, nor where, nor when, nor which. All this they leave you to discover for yourself." Now, surely, Martin Luther, the great champion of the doctrine of justification by faith, cannot be accused of any lack of spirituality, and let us take heed whether we do not become less spiritual in our ambition to be so by neglecting the ordinances of the church. If one so far gone in worldly feeling as Napoleon could so speak of the power of religious observances in touching the heart, how much more should the ministers of religion. "Last sunday evening," said he to one of his councillors, "in the general silence of nature, I was walking these grounds, when the sound of the church-bell of Ruel fell upon my ear, and renewed all the associations of youth. I was profoundly affected. Such is the power of early habit and associations; and I considered, if such were the case with me, what must be the effect upon the more simple minded and susceptible. Let your philosophers answer that. The people must have a religion."

Now we are far from wishing to look to darker ages, and revive the forms of the elder churches. We would observe the simple rites of Christianity, and practise such observances as circumstances may offer, and the heart demand. Let every event of life be hallowed by religion, let our joy and our anguish be consecrated. Let the wedding and the funeral have their sacred meaning, and recall the memory of Him, who stood once at the festival of Cana and at the grave of Lazarus. Let nature in all her seasons, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, have a meaning for the young. Let the closing year

have a voice of warning and the opening year speak tones of exhortation and encouragement. Let the happy Christmas tell the birth of the world's Saviour, and revive the gladness of the angel's song. Let the Easter hymn go up from the choir of youthful voices, and inspire new faith in that eternal life which is revealed, not merely by some Platonic speculation or mystic dream, but by the resurrection of the Son of God from the grave. So doing we shall best interest the young mind. We shall address its senses indeed, but thereby best wake its slumbering spirit, and instead of making our minds more carnal and sensuous, we shall have far more spirituality in the church than now. This I believe, sir, is good philosophy, and I know it is sure experience. More I could say, but must beg pardon for having transgressed so much already upon your patience.

Rev. Mr. Stebbins, of Leominster, rose and said:

Mr. President: I heartily concur with my brother who preceded me, in the opinion that children should be taught by external representations. Days and seasons do much, as has been truly and forcibly remarked, to awaken the young mind to an understanding of religious truth. Nature with her thousand manifestations of wisdom, power and love, may be used successfully, no doubt, to attract the mind to what is great and good in the Supreme Being. Spring with her flowers and incense — summer with her harvest and luxuriance — autumn with the golden fruit and parti-colored vestment — winter with its sleet and storms — all, all may be made to the child the means of leading it up to a love and reverence of its maker — to an admiration of what is holy, pure and good. But, sir, if I mistake not the nature of the child, and the nature of religious truth, and the

influence of religious character — the symbol which moves the heart most deeply, and leaves its mark upon the soul most perfectly, is the *character* of the teacher. Let the teacher be "full of the Holy Ghost," let the heart be a temple for virtue and holiness, and the face shine with their heavenly manifestation, as did Moses's when he came down from the mount of the Lord; the child will be moved, impressed, as no other thing can move or impress it. I say, if I understand the nature of the child, this will be the result. Imitation is the great law of its being. Let virtue shine ever before it in the face of its religious teacher and guide, and it will imitate virtue. Besides, virtue is more attractive in a living form than it can be in inert matter — and thus the character of the teacher has a direct and powerful influence upon the child.

The nature of religion, too, requires that it be presented, personified, embodied. So it was brought to us, in the spotless character of Jesus — and if it were necessary for mankind at large that religion should be embodied, and its power and beauty manifested in character, is it not clear that the child who learns by imitation infinitely faster than in any other way, should have a symbol of living virtue ever before it?

More than this; how can one teach the child respecting what is virtuous unless he have a true perception of what virtue is; how can one speak of the beauty of holiness, and the fear of the Lord, who has never had a vision of the one, or a sense of the other? The teacher must go to the class with a swelling heart — with vivid perceptions of the glorious reality of religious truth. Unless the truth be uttered in tones of deep and thrilling interest, it cannot be expected that the child will listen to it; and who can

thus utter it but one who has felt its power? I fear that teachers, a devoted band as they truly are, do not enough feel that their own characters are more powerful appeals to the child's feelings and understanding than the sweetest flower or softest breeze.

When the heart is full of a love of souls, and stirred with a sense of the value of religion, the lips will utter wisdom with fervor — the child's attention will be arrested and chained. It is not to be expected that children will listen when they are not interested, and they cannot be interested, except by the interest which they catch from the teacher. If a minister can so easily lull his audience into sleep when he is not roused, excited — the teacher cannot expect anything better than inattention from the class, when he speaks of God, Heaven, holiness, not in the tones of a citizen of the kingdom, but as a *stranger* in the commonwealth of Israel. I have had proof of this, sir, in my addresses to the school connected with my society. When the fire burns on the altar, I have no difficulty in kindling a flame elsewhere. Attention *will* be arrested, when truth is uttered from a full heart.

Teaching thus given will bring forth fruit — I have seen such fruit. I have seen a little child confined long by sickness without a murmur — calm, resigned, confiding as the aged Christian; with a conscience quick as the apple of an eye; and susceptibilities of the most delicate character. I have seen such a child look calmly down upon the flood which separates this life from the future, with an unfaltering eye, an unshrinking heart, and speak of the future with the calmness and trust of a mature mind. When the waters rose high around her, and her spirit began to ride upon its surface while the body was sinking beneath it, she said, when told she was

dying, "I want to go." Yes, teachers, such is the fruit which faithful teaching will produce. Be faithful then, knowing that you will have souls as the seals of *your* ministry, and crowns of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

Mr. WATERSTON next arose, and said that he would offer a few remarks upon a subject which he had selected, not because it was more important than others, but because it was not often dwelt upon, and he believed not yet fully appreciated — *the importance of keeping a record of those things which interest us as Sunday School teachers.*

Many things which interest us deeply at the time, on account of not being recorded, pass away from the memory and are utterly forgotten. Those who have had classes in the Sunday School must have often desired to look back into the past and recall things now obliterated from the memory. I judge of the present by what has been; to compare mind with mind, and to see whether we have ourselves been wise in our methods of instruction.

If such a record were kept, the most valuable parts might be copied for the superintendent. These extracts might be brought together and read occasionally at the teachers' meetings. In a few years the superintendent might, in this way, gather a most valuable collection of facts, which as long as the school existed would continue to accumulate. Then, if the superintendents of several schools could select from their various papers and bring them together, might it not lead to important suggestions?

But whether this were done or not, such a record would be valuable to the individual teacher, and in the course of years many things would be noted down which would give pleasure and instruction.

Such a record, if it did nothing more, might lead

to a more thorough method. It is to be feared that many now teach without much system. There is, if we may so speak, too little of a beginning, a middle, and an end. Many take up what strikes them at the moment; they follow no regular course. Now if a teacher would put down, week by week, the subject which had occupied the Sabbath, and at the end of the year would look back and reflect upon what had been done, it would probably lead to greater method; and while we would have no inflexible system and no frigid forms, we do think that some system is of great service. If then the record led to no more than this, it would do good; but there are many other advantages. Let us, then, consider some suggestions that naturally present themselves in considering this subject. What should be recorded?

An account of our visits to the parents. At times, in our visits, we may hear views upon education, which may throw light upon our labors. While some parents are neglectful and think little of the spiritual natures of their children, others, upon this subject, feel peculiar interest, and make it the object of deep reflection and prayer. Teachers, who have the privilege of visiting such parents, will often hear remarks which are well worth recording.

Sometimes also in our conversation with others, or in our reading, thoughts are suggested to us on Sunday School instruction, on the manner in which the Bible should be presented to the young, or the topics most profitable to bring before them, that might with profit be written down.

But the principal object of the record should be to express what falls under our observation in connection with the children. The teacher has a peculiar opportunity of noticing the unfolding of mind. Of observing the natural thoughts and emotions of the

infant spirit, and perhaps no subject has given rise to greater divisions in the Christian church, or led to more varied theories in philosophy. Some have said that the child was totally depraved, others that it comes from God unsullied as a ray of light, others that the child has capacities for good or for evil, and that it depends upon education how it uses them. Such have been the different views in the church; and in philosophy there have been as great differences, for while some believe in innate ideas, and the native consciousness of right and wrong, and compare the mind to a seed, which must unfold and grow, others believe that the mind is at first a blank, which must be written upon from without, an empty cup which must be filled by our pouring into it. The remarkable language of Christ, in regard to children, has not yet led men to agree. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," is not the universal motto of divines or philosophers. Now whatever views are right, these differences have split the church and thrown a hue upon much of the sacred literature of the world. The subject is an important one, and anything which will tend to solve the problem will throw light upon human nature, and give a truer view of that Divine Being in whose image man was made.

Now who has a better opportunity of studying the mind of the child, than the Sunday School teacher? He comes with spiritual truth, he can compare mind with mind. When truth is given, he can see, whether there is an answering spirit within. May we not say that no one has a better opportunity, and perhaps no one so good? The parent observes the children of his own family, the Sunday School teacher the children of several families, and thus the teacher has opportunities which may afford uncommon interest and instruction. Let the teacher then improve the oppor-

tunity, and from time to time record the result of his observations.

But some teachers may say, "If we should make a record, it would be but dry questions and answers, a mere skeleton." And this no doubt, in some cases, would be the result. It is a rare gift to be able to draw out a child's highest powers. It is not every one who can do it. Some say, "we have heard much about the beautiful remarks of children, and their spiritual thoughts; but it is all a dream: we have tried it, and could get nothing from them." And this is no doubt true; they have tried, but it is not every key that will unlock the casket. To cross-question a child in order to find out its spiritual views, is like dissecting a bird in hopes of finding the song it sings. The deepest feelings of all minds are generally the most kept from sight. We instinctively shield them from observation. So while we can tell from the questions and occasional remarks of children what glimpses they get of great truths, what longings at times stir their young hearts, yet few are the persons who can lead the spirit out, who can converse, as it were, face to face, with the deepest nature of the child. As in the Arabian tale — no giant power, no armed force could break open the gates of the cavern; while one particular word, though spoken by the lips of a child, would cause them to roll back—so with the infant mind. Mere curiosity cannot gratify its desires, but to kindness, spirituality and truth, the privilege alone belongs. They only bear the golden key that can open this treasure-house of the Lord.

In order, then, to keep a good record, it is important to know how we shall get at the child's mind. And may we not say that to get at the child's mind, the most requisite thing is to be child-like. This, above all things, is important in a teacher. It has been said,

by a distinguished philosopher, that the great characteristic of genius was to carry the feelings of childhood, into the maturity of riper years; and what the philosopher remarks of genius, the Saviour requires of the Christian. "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." The great requisite of the teacher is what Christ requires of all—to be a little child, in freshness, in simplicity, and love. If teachers could meet their classes in this way, they would be able both to gain more and to impart more. They would lay aside all stiffness and sternness and the children would meet them with a confiding trust and warm affection, and hence the conversations that would flow from such meetings would be full of freshness and life, and the records of such conversation would of course be proportionally valuable.

But it is not only important to consider *how* to teach, but *what* to teach. For if the teacher were ever so child-like, and the child ever so confiding, little would come from mere technical questions respecting Palestine and the like. The teacher must not seek that which is intellectual, so much as what is spiritual; not mere geography, but religious truth; not the dead letter of the gospel, but its divine meaning. In order to awaken spirit, we must have spirit. In order to call out the highest powers of the mind, we must take the highest truths, and the highest truths are the simplest, and to the simplest and highest truths the young mind will most quickly respond.

Still many may say, "all this will avail little in respect to calling out any particular power in the child. You may, no doubt, do the child some good, you may give it some correct notions, but as to its

having any slumbering gifts within, we have no faith in that." Thus many are sceptical, they look at the diminutive form, they hear some trifling remarks and hence they judge there is nothing beneath. But do we not know that if we gaze at the seed we cannot yet see the flower, though the embryo of the flower must be in the seed? And who can tell of the powers that are wrapt up in the spirit? Claude, the great artist, of whom Sir Joshua Reynolds said that "the world might sooner expect to see another Raphael, than another Claude," was, until late in life, wholly unconscious of his great powers. When at school he was considered very dull, and from school he was apprenticed to a pastry cook. In after life he was hired by Augustine Trasso to grind colors and do household drudgery — at which time the productions of his master, and the paintings in the galleries of Rome, awakened within him powers, which until this time had slumbered, but which were now destined to astonish the world. Had Claude died in middle life he would have died a pastry cook; as it was, his name is revered by all artists, and his paintings are the pride of kings. It seemed a mere circumstance which called out his powers at that late period of life. Yet the powers were there and would have been, had they never been called out, and how do we know what powers are slumbering in minds around us? How do we know what powers slumber in the child? If not intellectual powers, there are spiritual. If there is not capacity to become a distinguished artist, or poet, or statesman, there is a capacity that will enable him to love truth and become a disciple of Christ. Other instances might be mentioned quite as remarkable as Claude, but this is sufficient to show what prodigious ability may exist

in the mind, when no one around knows it, and when even the individual himself does not.

In order then, to meet a child aright, we should have faith in its yet undeveloped powers. In proportion as we are deficient in this faith, our work becomes irksome; a trial to ourselves, as well as to those under our care. And this leads us to one other consideration. In keeping a record of our interviews with the children, we must not expect to record great results at once. The mind often opens by slow degrees; the powers, that may be there, are often long in awakening. As in some places wells have been dug which seemed to lead to nothing but sand and gravel and clay, till, when almost tempted to abandon the whole work, one more pressure of the spade and the water has gushed up like a river; so at times with the young we may toil and toil and see no good result, but persevere, and by and by you shall strike the spring and the living waters will burst out with unexpected freshness. How important is it to persevere with this faith; to go on with our work, contented to do our duty, even while as yet we see no visible result. How important is such a faith to the Sabbath School teacher — and how interesting, under this aspect, does the record become. A record which will recall to our minds the gradual growth of those under our care, which will show how benighted the mind was at one time, when the light commenced to dawn, and how it increased in brightness. With this faith, the teacher will not despond, though at first little fruit should appear. He will be contented to let patience have her perfect work. There will be no serious disappointment though in the weekly record of questions and answers there should be nothing either deep or brilliant. Some will show the good they receive early, and others late; over the

first we may rejoice, but over the latter we should never despair. When the teacher meets his class,

> ——— "he sows seeds
> To blossom in their manhood and bear fruit
> When they are old,"

and must not be distrustful though many a day pass before the harvest appear.

It is said by Plutarch, that there was an ancient city so cold at particular seasons, that words were congealed, as soon as spoken, but that, after some time, they thawed and became audible. So the teacher may often speak words which will at first be unheeded, but in after years — in the summer of life — they will thaw out, and the mind will hear them, and understand their meaning, and listen to their accents as to the sweet voice of an angel.

Rev. Mr. Robbins, recently of Lynn, followed, and made a few remarks on the want of faith on the part of the teacher in regard to the soul of the pupil. The nature of that soul, he said, was not understood — the universality, the immortality, and the value of the soul. This sublime truth must be efficiently taught in the Sunday School if we would educate the child in the most perfect manner.

There was another truth, he said, which must have the teacher's earnest regard. The character of Jesus — of Jesus as the infinite man — whose *example* is to be the great teacher of the human family. Words would not do this. The example, the character of Jesus, who ploughed his life into the field of humanity, this it was that would excite the minds of the young to bring out in their own lives, the lineaments of the Saviour's perfections. In his opinion, Christ was crucified daily in the public school; and it became, therefore, the more necessary, to build up a wall of fire out of the school to protect the young

from the temptations of the world, and the corruptions by which they were surrounded.

Rev. Mr. GANNETT, having been requested by the committee, rose he said to speak, although the hour was late. He remarked, that in his opinion, children were not those who were most benefited by the Sunday School. But on the contrary, the teachers. If, said he, the Sunday School did no other good, that which it effects for the teacher rendered it worthy of all regard. The *age* at which they usually entered upon the work, was favorable to such a result, — the forming, active, and growing period of life. Their *social condition*, belonging as they usually did to the middle class, neither too poor on the one hand, nor too rich on the other, was another most favorable circumstance connected with this employment, in the effects it was to produce on their minds and characters. The employment itself, that of *teaching*, was better adapted than any other, to develope the faculties and call into action the higher powers of our nature. Those again, whom they taught — human beings in the infancy of life — were *subjects*, that could not fail to lead them to the study of their own natures, the first step to all true wisdom and improvement. The *topics* too, upon which they were to dwell, were those connected with the highest interests and duties of man, and were such as to arouse the conscience and to mend the heart. The book which they used, the *Bible*, was another circumstance of great value in making up an estimate of the true worth of this employment to the character and happiness of the teacher. The study of this book unfolded the history of the human family, and of God's dealings with them, in a way to awaken the deepest reflections, and the sublimest thoughts. The use of it, therefore, as a manual, was one of the best

means to improve, in the highest degree, the character of the wise and intelligent teacher. The necessity of a good *example* also forced itself upon the mind of every one who was aiming to make others better. In studying the characters of others again, in order to their improvement, the teacher was led to a study in detail of his own character, and this would contribute in no small degree to his own gradual growth in goodness and excellence. If, again, the teacher insisted on *obedience* to the divine will on the part of others, this would urge the necessity of obedience upon his own conscience. Another privilege of the teacher which he insisted upon was, that it brought him into constant intercourse with the minister — and this intercourse with the wise and good was of great value on the young and forming character.

In conclusion, he urged upon those who were teachers, to improve these privileges in the development of all their powers; and to this end they must *study*, *think*, *pray*, and *act;* and to those who were not teachers, he held out these advantages as the highest inducement, without any other solicitation, to come up to the good work of Sunday School instruction.

The doxology was then sung by the whole audience, and the meeting, one of the happiest and most profitable of the kind, was brought to a close.

We regret that in relation to the addresses of Messrs. Thurston, Robbins and Gannett, that we are unable to do more from our scanty notes, than to furnish the meagre notices which are appended to this report. The others are full and authentic, and will be read with deep interest.

THE

TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

READ AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-SEVENTH OF MAY, 1840.

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PROCEEDINGS

OF

TWELFTH ANNUAL MEETING.

The public annual meeting of the Sunday School Society was held at the Rev. Dr. Channing's Church, on Wednesday evening, May 27, 1840.

The services of the present week varied from those of former years, so that instead of a Report and several Addresses, it consisted of the Annual Report and a single Discourse.

These services were introduced by an appropriate and fervent prayer by the Rev. Dr. Sanger, of Dover. Rev. Mr. Muzzey, the Corresponding Secretary, then read the Annual Report. This was an interesting and valuable document. It comprised the substance of letters which had been received in answer to the Society's Circular, and embraced a body of facts in relation to the following subjects, namely, the value of the General Exercise in Sunday Schools,—its influence on the children, and its value to the teachers,—on Sunday School Anniversaries and Union celebrations, which appear to have become quite common,—imparting importance to the Institution, interest to the children, and profit alike to parents, teachers, and the community at large;—on Sunday School Libraries which were represented as generally useful, and when well selected and well conducted as being of more value than gold; and, finally, on the teaching of doctrinal subjects, which seemed to be disapproved in regard to the younger,

but approved in reference to the elder classes of pupils. The Report referred to the temporary appointment last autumn of Rev. Mr. Waterston as an agent of the Society, — of his visit to the county of Franklin, and Keene, N. H. — visiting eighteen schools, during an absence of twelve days, and making thirteen addresses, with great acceptance and to the instruction and profit of all. The Report further stated that Rev. F. T. Gray had been appointed permanent agent of the Society, for the performance of certain duties of a like nature, not interfering with his other engagements; — it adverted to a letter received from Rev. Mr. Parkes, Bristol, England, and the increasing interest in Sunday Schools in that country; — to the death of the revered President of the Society, Rev. Dr. Tuckerman, who had been such for eight years, and paid a grateful and feeling tribute to his services and memory; and closed with some general remarks of an interesting and useful character.

After the reading of the Report, the following hymn, composed for the occasion, by Dr. T. Gray, was sung by the choir.

They brought fresh flowers, O God, of yore
To temples not thine own;
And left those fair things withering there
On that false altar-stone.

No pagan offerings Lord *we* bring,
We deck no stranger shrine;
The deathless flowers of brighter worlds
We offer up on Thine.

The deathless flowers of brighter worlds
To earth's cold climate given,
With toil and tears, and many a prayer,
We rear, O Lord, for Heaven.

And lay them on thy shrine of love,
Fit offering for the sky—
We know *they* shall not change or fade
Beneath the Eternal eye.

Accept the offering — flowers of heaven,
Immortal flowers we bring; —
Young spirits trained and purified,
For Heaven's undying spring.

This was followed by a Discourse by R. C. Waterston. The subject of it was "The Diffusive Nature of Christianity." — It was full of rich and valuable thoughts, glowing and pertinent imagery and illustrations, and an able exposition of the value of Sunday Schools to the church, the parents, the teachers, and the pupils.

After the public meeting had been brought to a close by the singing of the usual doxology, a meeting of the members was held, who voted that a copy of the Discourse be requested, and published with the Report.

It was also voted, on motion of Rev. Mr. Gannett, of this city, in accordance with a suggestion made in the Discourse, that it be recommended to the several Sunday Schools in connection with the Society, to take up a collection from among the pupils and teachers of each, for the purpose of enabling it to employ an agent as proposed.

The Report and Discourse have since been obtained, and are now published for the use of the Society.

REPORT.

The Directors of the Sunday School Society issued their Circular, this season, as usual, although not directly to the schools, but through a public Journal. The replies are less numerous than in some former years. We are enabled, however, to supply this defect by the returns received from our temporary agent, to which we shall subsequently refer.

In answer to our first question, we learn that most of the schools have usually a General Exercise. This is given, in some cases, always by the pastor; in others, by individuals invited for that purpose from abroad; and in still others, by the superintendent or the teachers.

To our second inquiry the replies are generally quite favorable. The Address serves, it is thought, to excite the attention of the children, and leads them to feel a sympathy with each other, and a general interest in the school. The pastor of Northfield gives, as his opinion, that these exercises should be only occasional. "They will then," he says, "be probably suggested by peculiar circumstances, and will not be of a uniform, monotonous character." He adds, "that remarks from strangers are very beneficial, because the novelty fixes the minds of the young, and with the name of the stranger is associated the instruction he gave, or the impression made by his remarks."

This exercise is thought of service to teachers. Where they give the address, says one, "it is useful as an aid in arranging their thoughts, and in the application of the means which they have but imperfectly at command." "It serves," says another, "to give the teacher confidence in himself, as a public speaker." When given by others, the address "often affords valuable hints to the teacher."

From the superintendent of the school in the Twelfth Congregational Society in this city, we learn that the Address is a part of their regular exercises, that "it is generally listened to with all the interest that could be desired, both by teachers and pupils, and that the interest seems rather to increase than abate, by the continuance of the practice."

From the Howard Sunday School we have also this testimony: — "We have evidence that in many cases the strongest and most salutary impressions have been made by this service. In instances where these addresses have been repeated, after a lapse of years, they have been distinctly recollected by the pupils. There are also subjects constantly recurring, which it is of importance to bring before the *whole* school."

Our Lowell correspondent looks upon this exercise, "as entirely subordinate to the personal intimacy which is to be cultivated between the teacher and his class," and considers that "the most important if not the only means of rendering Sunday School instruction effectual."

We learn, as regards our third question, that on Sunday School Anniversaries, that they are becoming quite frequent. The pastor in Warwick writes, that they have at the close of their school, a report and an address, which he "deems of importance as bringing the parents and friends to a better knowledge of the school, and serving to engage them to bestow upon it an increasing regard." This opinion is confirmed by

another, who says their anniversary "is looked forward to by the children with interest," that it "gives more importance to the Institution, drawing parents and the society at large to inquire, and inform themselves, as to the operation of the school and its effects upon the children."

In one instance the anniversary is held on Christmas eve, when the church is appropriately decorated and public addresses are made. "The benefits are, to the children," says the writer, "a happy, innocent, and I confidently add, a holy festival. To the teachers, not only a pleasant but a profitable meeting; but most of all to the parents, it is an occasion, which none would neglect attending. An opportunity is presented of proving to them, what some would never otherwise believe, that the school is worthy their approbation, encouragement, and support."

The pastor at Cohasset speaks warmly in favor of union Sunday School celebrations, and thinks, from his own experience, that, if they are conducted in the right spirit, "we may hope the next generation will suffer less from bigotry and intolerance than has the present." "The exclusive principle can find no place," he justly remarks, "in the groves, — God's first temples, — and it meets with a stern rebuke from the voice of the infinite ocean, which bears all ships on its bosom, and bathes the shores of every land. There is also a uniting and harmonizing influence, that comes from singing together the praises of the same God, and partaking together his rich bounties."

In reference to Sunday School libraries, our correspondents are, for the most part, agreed, that they are capable of being exceedingly useful. One, however, writes that they have no library; another, that "where parents are both able and disposed to furnish their children with all proper and needful books, a library can

be dispensed with." Still another speaks of doubts as to the effects of the library. "If it be constituted, as too many are, of works of amusement, it soon degenerates into a mere juvenile circulating library, made up of similar materials with those usually open for older people." He thinks it highly desirable and necessary that works placed in Sunday School libraries should be of a more select character, and of a more direct religious tendency, than they usually are.

A letter from Quincy expresses a strong doubt whether their "library has any very important effect on the minds and characters of the children." It is regarded as chiefly useful in bringing in many children to the school, who would not perhaps otherwise attend. Another thinks their library important both in preserving the interest of the children in the school, and improving their minds. It is asked by one "how a library *can* be other than beneficial, when selected with care, and used by children who have access, as is often the case, to none or very few other books, to engage their leisure hours."

"Our library," writes the pastor at Leominster, "is worth more than gold to our school. It is a benefit not only to the pupils, but to the teachers, and the parents. I find, in my pastoral visits, that the books which the children bring home with them, are a source of much information to parents. We need," he adds, "more books, however, adapted to the wants of Sunday Schools. Could a little library, or set of books of fifty volumes, for the very *smallest* children in our schools be published, and bound strong, — I can think of nothing which would be more useful." "We need," he again says, "and must have, more books of religious biography. Cannot lives of our good and faithful pastors and laymen be published in book, as well as in sermon form, so that they may be placed in our libraries?"

The opinion comes to us from one pastor that too many books of a fictitious nature have been prepared for Sunday School libraries. These are objected to, as creating "a taste for light reading, that is, for reading more for amusement than for improvement."

"The influence on the *children's* minds," says the pastor of Suffolk Street Chapel, "is not the only salutary effect springing from a Sunday School Library. We have known the perusal of a little book, which his child had brought home from the Sunday School, to avert the cup, and save the life — aye! the *soul* of an intemperate father. Nay, more — in one instance, the purpose of a suicide has been mercifully turned aside by the entrance of a little girl into an abode of misery, her home, where she came with joyful song, after service on Sunday, and showed her maniac father the book from the library. That book he read. It soothed him, even as the harp of David soothed the raving Saul. Since that he is an altered man, and now honors the soul, at whose destruction he once aimed."

From two different sources we have received the suggestion, that this society would render a valuable service to the young by selecting, or sanctioning, suitable books for Sunday School libraries. The impression seems very strong, that on no point does our cause labor more than on this, the deficiency of such books as will both attract and nourish the minds of our children.

On the last topic named in our Circular, that which refers to Doctrinal instruction, we find, as was anticipated, a diversity of opinions. A few express themselves decidedly averse to the inculcation of peculiar points of faith, and confine their teachings to an infusion of "the spirit of truth" and the enforcement of practical piety. Others are quite as warmly disposed to teach the distinctive doctrines of Christianity. It is thought that when we come to certain passages in the Scriptures,

we cannot interpret them clearly without expressing our doctrinal opinions." One remarks, "we do enforce, I trust, with proper correctness and zeal, the *fundamental* doctrines of the Gospel." Another thinks young children should be taught only so as to excite the spirit of truth, but adults in our schools should be taught truth in a systematic form. He expresses the hope that we shall soon have a "manual of the great religious truths of the Bible, not to be studied and relied upon," but as "a guide in a systematic" pursuit of divine truth.

The superintendent of the school at Cambridge (Port) writes thus; "the propriety of inculcating peculiar doctrinal opinions has been fully discussed at our weekly teachers' meetings, and some difference of opinion was found to exist. Some contended earnestly, that every teacher should be qualified to teach, not only all the precepts, but the doctrines of the Gospel; that they should not only know themselves in whom they have believed, but should teach that theirs is not a *negative*, nor a *dead*, but a *living* faith. Others contended that doctrines, being the cause of most of the dissensions among different sects, it were well, in our instructions, to omit them altogether. "To my mind," he adds, "it is evident that we should teach *all* that our Master directed, all that is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

In accordance with the views of our correspondent, perhaps the true course would require us to state our own views with candor and in love, and then give the grounds of those views, and request the child to judge for himself what is right. By entire silence on the subject, we leave him in ignorance, exposed to every wind of doctrine; in danger from error, and liable to all those moral obliquities that spring from that baleful root. How can we love God, cordially and continually, unless

we become acquainted with his amiable attributes? Do not our views of Jesus affect materially our lives and characters? And who is he that loveth his brother, all men, saint and sinner, except he who regards their nature as deserving his interest and affection?

An object of prominent attention with the Directors, during the past year, has been the employment of one or more Agents for the purpose of visiting the schools in the country. It was thought that, in addition to other benefits of such missions, much good might accrue from thus gathering information relative to the condition and prospects of the Sunday School, and diffusing that information in other forms. Teachers who were fainting by the way, would thus be animated and encouraged to new efforts, and parents and children would attach a new importance to the work of religious instruction.

With a view to obtaining the opinions of their friends on this subject, a meeting of the Society was called, during the autumn, for its discussion. The interest was such as to induce an adjournment to another evening. A general and hearty desire was expressed, by the large audiences who attended these meetings, for the establishment of the contemplated agency. It was voted that the directors enter at once on the prosecution of this duty. They accordingly invited the Rev. Mr. Waterston to perform a temporary service of this kind, by visiting the Sunday Schools of our denomination in Franklin county.

Mr. Waterston accepted the trust, and during a short tour was enabled, by great industry, to collect reports from all the schools in the county, and to meet and address a large proportion of them. He extended his journey to Keene, N. H., where he met the Pastoral Association of that vicinity, and also the Sunday School Association. During his absence, which was but for twelve days, he obtained reports of the condition of eighteen

schools, and made thirteen addresses. He states that the interest in our work is evidently increasing, although in some instances there is complaint of the want of competent teachers, and of suitable books for the libraries. In a few cases, the necessity of a more cordial co-operation on the part of parents was expressed to him.

From letters since received, we learn that the labors of Mr. W. were abundantly successful. Hearts were cheered; faith was increased; and universal approbation was expressed, accompanied by an earnest request that similar visits might be repeated. The blessing of God evidently crowned this endeavor.* The Directors were hence induced to appoint a permanent Agent, who should visit the schools, in person, or by substitute, whenever application was made for his services. They are happy in saying that they have secured for this office one, whose long and unabated devotion to the cause gives hope of his accomplishing great good, as our agent, the Rev. F. T. Gray of this city.

Copies of our Annual Report have been sent, accompanied by letters, to several of our friends abroad. We have recently received one communication in return. It is from Mr. Parkes, superintendent of the Sunday School in the late Dr. Carpenter's Society, Bristol, England. "We have remarked," he writes, "with much pleasure, in some of your periodicals, the continued prosperity of your Society, and we cannot help thinking that we may derive mutual benefit by maintaining a regular communication."

On one topic he writes thus: "It may be worth mentioning that the School Library, which we formerly spoke of (in 1834), continues in full activity, and by judicious management it is rendered both of interest and

* See note at the end of Report.

service to the children, without producing any detrimental effect."

Accompanying this letter, Mr. Parkes, has kindly sent us the last Report of the London Sunday School Association, which gives us interesting accounts of the English Schools. It speaks of five in London and one in each of the following places, Bath, Bristol, Leicester, Plymouth, Newport, (Isle of Wight,) Norwich, Taunton and Yarmouth. In that at Newport, we are told that the attendance is regular, and "a lively interest is taken by the children in the duties of the school, — in proof of which it is stated, that one of the girls, who is now at service, has, with the consent of her mistress, prevailed on her mother to take charge of the infant entrusted to her care, on the Sunday afternoon, to give her daughter the opportunity of joining her class; and the chief difficulty the teachers find is, in reconciling the children to a *cheerful* submission to their parents or mistresses, when they require their services at home."

The method of instruction in this school is one which cannot be too highly commended. "The teachers endeavor, by constant questionings, numerous oral explanations, and familiar conversations, to cultivate more the *reflective* than the *retentive* powers of the children's minds. And their intention, with regard to the lessons which are committed to memory, is to make them rather texts, on which to dilate, and from which instructions shall be drawn, and the subject-matter of thought and discussion, than to load the memory with numbers of phrases, which may be totally useless to the child, because he does not understand them. They particularly aim to develope the rational faculties, refine the affections, and above all, to produce a pious and virtuous disposition." This Report confirms the opinion of our correspondent, who remarks, "we cannot help believing that a much greater interest is being

taken in the subject of Sunday School instruction both among ourselves and the Orthodox in England, than has ever before been the case."

We have still the promise of letters from the Superintendent of the Sunday School in Rev. Mr. Philp's Society, in London.

We cannot conceal from ourselves, nor would we from the community, that doubts continue to be expressed by some, in regard to the utility of Sunday School instruction, and the general effect of the institution. When we consider, however, the nature of our political atmosphere, there is occasion for congratulation, that so few dissent from us, as respects our interest in the religious culture of the young, and our endeavors to promote that divine work. We may err, in reference to the best means and methods of attaining our object. It is possible that none have yet discovered the precise point, at which the healthful action of society is consistent with the entire freedom of the individual. The head may be educated to the neglect of the heart, mere intellectual, being as it never should be, preferred to spiritual instruction. The Sunday School may be valued by some too highly for itself, its high and holy *end* being meantime forgotten.

It is worthy of remark, that while some among us look with jealousy on the Sunday School, as infringing on the rights of conscience and shackling the infant mind, there are those in other denominations, if not in our own, who consider their danger as precisely of an opposite character. They teach the children, it is said, to *think too much*, to speculate on doctrines, which they ought implicitly to receive, as the revealed word of God.

Let us listen to, and be taught, as we may, by all men; and by shunning every extreme, and by a vigilant care, where evil is near, commend ourselves in the sight of conscience, and in the eye of Him, who is pure

light, and pure love. Let us gather wisdom from the memory of him, whose recent death has set the seal to his faithful instructions, while living. Dr. Tuckerman, who for eight successive years held the office of president of this Society, though dead, yet speaketh. Not only his wisdom but his *benevolence*, that trait by which he was so justly designated, both in his own and foreign lands, was eminently manifested in his spiritual regard for the young. He has passed from his earthly ministrations to that higher sphere, where we may conceive him, with his accustomed benignant countenance, now bidding little children, like Jesus, welcome to his arms.

If we can but detach the great purpose of our efforts, — to aid children in the formation of the Christian character, — from every form that would impede its execution; if we can make the outward entirely and continually subservient to the inward; if we can relax those bonds that the world, by its sins and temptations, is fastening on the souls of these little ones, and lead them by the silken cords of Christ, our labors will never prove in vain. Our path may not be always unclouded. No human enterprise is so. But it shall be still upward. Earnest endeavors shall be the gentle breeze, that dispels all mists, and opens the young heart to the rays of that Sun, before which earthly lights grow dim, and which shines more and more unto the perfect day.

In behalf of the Directors.

A. B. MUZZEY.

Boston, May 27, 1840.

NOTE.

To the Board of the
Sunday School Society, —

Gentlemen, — In accordance with the vote passed by your Society, I have visited the various Sunday Schools connected with the Franklin Evangelical Association. And I herewith present to your Board such information as I was able to collect, in regard to the prosperity of the schools and their various modes of operation.

By an understanding on the part of the different schools, on the days when I visited them public meetings were held, at which parents, teachers and scholars were invited to be present; generally, Reports were read, containing a brief account of the doings of the past year, which was followed by my addressing the meeting, on some of the many subjects connected with the religious instruction of the young.

The religious society at New Salem is small — but from what I could see and learn a good spirit is at work. The Rev. Mr. Harding who has been settled in this place over thirty years, has many things to contend with, but seems ready to labor without ceasing for the spread of the gospel. The school averages about fifty scholars and ten teachers.

In the school at Warwick there are one hundred and sixty scholars, eleven classes of boys and fourteen of girls. The average attendance has been one hundred and twenty-nine; many of the children came three and four, and some even five miles. The instruction given is as follows: the elder classes study lessons prepared by the pastor; the younger study the New Testament. There are frequent teachers' meetings at which the pastor presides. There is a Bible class under the care of the pastor, varying from thirty to fifty. This class is composed of adults. The library contains four hundred and forty-four volumes.

I next went to Northfield, where there is a large religious society under the care of Rev. Mr. Everett. There seems here much spiritual activity. The school num-

bers nineteen teachers and one hundred and sixty-two scholars. There are teachers' meetings every other week, and at stated times reports are handed in, giving an account of each scholar. It is the purpose in instructing to combine natural religion with revealed. In the school is a regular course of study. 1st. Gallaudet's Book on the Soul; 2d. Channing's and Worcester's Catechism; 3d. Gallaudet's Natural Theology; 4th. Allen's Questions; 5th. Nichole's Natural Theology; 6th. Fox's Ministry of Christ. There is also a class of young men who meet at the pastor's house, to follow out a course of private religious study.

At South Farms, a beautiful spot on the banks of the Connecticut, there is another school, which was established during the last summer. In this School the Baptists unite with those of our denomination, and all goes on in harmony.

In Brattleboro', there is a flourishing society over which Rev. Mr. Brown is settled. There are through the year, about ten teachers and forty scholars. The teachers are much interested. Their meetings are held once a month. The course of study is Gallaudet on the Soul; Questions on the Gospels; Worcester Catechism; Allen's Questions; and Ware's Life of the Saviour.

At Vernon, there is no settled clergyman. Rev. Mr. Rogers, of Bernardston, preaches in this place as often as his duties in Bernardston will allow. There is a class of adults who meet him on the Sabbath for the study of the Scriptures; and they are in hopes that they may be soon able to open a school.

At Bernardston, old and young seemed alike interested. The church was crowded. The middle seats were filled with the scholars of their flourishing school. And their answers to the many questions which were asked by the Superintendent, were answered with great propriety and promptness. This school has been in successful operation for ten years, and during the last year twenty teachers, and one hundred and sixty-six scholars have attended. The library contains six hundred and eighteen volumes. All of the scholars (in addition to what they have ac-

quired in their respective classes) have, during the past season, searched out the answers to twenty-three general questions; attended particularly to portions of the Old Testament, their history and meaning; have learned to repeat and sing five hymns, and thoroughly studied one chapter in Luke, and four in Ephesians.

At Deerfield there is a large society. In the Sunday School there are seventeen teachers and eighty scholars. Dr. Willard and Rev. Mr. Fessenden took part in the meeting.

At Greenfield the school, as far as I could understand, was in a feeble state. The pastor being absent, there was no meeting of the school. I therefore passed on through Colerain to Rowe, where I arrived about ten in the evening, riding in an open wagon, over immense hills. The driver of the wagon met me at Colerain. He was an aged man, plainly dressed, with a broken pipe thrust through his hat band. In his conversation he manifested excellent good sense and deep piety; and this person had been the superintendent of the Sunday School for *twenty years*. At ten o'clock in the evening we arrived at the clergyman's house, a small, humble dwelling, among the hills. I was heartily welcomed, and he who has received such a welcome from one who is laboring in the vineyard of Christ, far away from the intercourse of his brethren, must have felt how cheering it is thus to meet a Christian brother, and exchange words of sympathy.

The next morning we went to the church, — a square weather-beaten building on the brow of a rock. On entering we found a congregation who had assembled as in the good old primitive times. They had come over many high hills, through thickly wooded ravines, amid the keen frosty air of an autumnal morning; and it was a touching sight to behold them uniting in meek devotion.

After leaving Rowe I visited Charlemont, where I addressed the people of that village. From thence proceeded to Keene, in order to meet the Pastoral Association. Several of the most able clergymen of the county were present, and the meeting was one of much interest.

At three o'clock the Sunday School Association of that county held its Anniversary meeting in Rev. Mr. Livermore's church, where were assembled many of the teachers, and nearly all the clergymen of the county.

The number of teachers and scholars in the schools connected with this association is as follows.

	Teachers.	Scholars.
Charlestown,	11	101
Doublin,	26	111
Keene,	29	139
Walpole,	15	80
Wilton,	30	130
Peterboro',	22	110
Fitzwilliam,	11	74
	113	744

In every society where there is a settled clergyman there has been an increase of scholars and teachers, and, in several of the churches, Bible classes have been formed. The one in Charlestown meets on Sunday evening, at the clergyman's house. There is some complaint as to the difficulty of obtaining faithful and well qualified teachers, and more books are needed in the libraries. Still it is generally thought that the schools increase in interest, and that the teachers are, for the most part, earnestly engaged, and faithful in their preparation for the Sunday's work.

The next morning left Keene for Boston, where I arrived in the evening, having been absent twelve days, travelled three hundred and seventeen miles, obtained reports from eighteen schools, and delivered thirteen addresses.

From all that I saw and heard in my absence, I was convinced that great good might result if some judicious and warm-hearted Christian could be sent from town to town, at appropriate seasons, to speak words of wisdom and spiritual life.

Very respectfully,

R. C. WATERSTON.

THE

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH THE

ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-SIXTH OF MAY, 1841.

BOSTON:
SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS.
1841.

BOSTON,
Printed by I. R. Butts.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING.

The Annual Meeting of the Sunday School Society was held at the Church in Federal Street, on Wednesday evening, May 26th. The President, Dr. J. F. Flagg, of this city, was in the Chair; and the throne of grace was addressed by the Rev. Mr. Stebbins, of Leominster.

The Annual Report was read by the Corresponding Secretary, Rev. A. B. Muzzey, of Cambridge. It was an interesting document, containing many valuable suggestions and important facts. The first portion was occupied with an abstract of the answers received to three questions proposed in the Annual Circular. The first of these questions was, "Do you succeed in keeping alive the interest felt by the oldest male scholars in the subject of religion after they leave school; and if so, by what means?" The answers to this question upon the whole were favorable: but in some instances discouragement was expressed, and disappointment had been experienced. The second question, "In what

manner do you recommend children to spend the Sabbath ?" was answered in a manner and tone every way satisfactory, exhibiting a true Christian feeling on this most important subject. The last question, " What is the comparative importance you attach in the instruction of your scholars to the external and the inward or experimental evidences of the truth of Christianity ?" received for an answer, that the evidences should never be, and were seldom or never taught, especially to the younger classes ; but when introduced, were communicated incidentally, the external and internal receiving an equal share of attention.

The second portion of the Report embraced extracts from their foreign correspondence, from Rev. Mr. Wellbeloved, York, Rev. Mr. Tayler, Manchester, and Rev. Mr. Philp, London ; which were listened to with much interest and satisfaction. The third and last portion gave a condensed view of the Society's operations through an agency established the last year, the Rev. F. T. Gray acting as agent, assisted by others. The details of this part of the Report were quite interesting. The number of schools visited and addressed was 28. In these schools were 658 teachers and 4033 children ; and 1200 miles had been travelled in order to meet and address these several schools. With one or two exceptions the schools visited were found in a good condition. The agent was received by them all in the most friendly and cordial manner. The purchase of suitable tracts for distribution, and the establishment of life memberships were earnestly recommended by the agent as a new means of increasing the usefulness of the Society. It further appeared that during the year the Society had held three public meetings in the city, beside the Annual Meeting, and printed 1500 copies and distributed the same to every school in the Union, of their last Annual Report, together with Rev. R. C. Waterston's Address delivered before the Society at the same meeting.

After the reading of this able Report the meeting was addressed by Rev. F. T. Gray of Boston; Rev. Mr. Frost, of Concord, Mass.; Rev. Mr. Fox, of Newburyport; George Bemis, Esq. of Boston; Rev. Mr. Lothrop, of Boston; Rev. Dr. Nichols, of Portland; and Rev. Mr. Giles, of Liverpool, England. The Report was then accepted and the meeting adjourned.

At the commencement of the services, two hymns were sung by a juvenile choir, under the charge of Mr. Baker, and the Doxology at the close, by the whole audience.

The addresses on this occasion were such as to enlighten, encourage and gladden the hearts of those engaged in the great subject of the moral and religious education of the young.

REPORT.

A REVIEW of the condition of our Sunday Schools during the past year, leads us to conclude that at no time has this institution accomplished more happily its high purpose. The Directors rejoice in bearing testimony to an increased spirituality, both among the teachers and children. Less reliance is placed now than formerly either on mere intellectual instruction or on forms and manuals alone. The conviction is becoming more and more general, that the one thing needful is personal piety in the heart of the teacher. Nor are children dismissed now so often as they once were,

from our schools, skilled only in a barren knowledge of the works of nature, or of the letter of the divine word.

1. The first question in our Circular was in the following words: "Do you succeed in keeping alive the interest felt by the oldest male scholars in the subject of religion, after they leave your school; and if so, by what means?"

In reply to this inquiry, the Pastor at Warwick writes, "I am constrained to say, that I have not witnessed so much evidence of a permanent interest in religion in the oldest male scholars, as would be gratifying; and this to me is discouraging, and has led me to think that greater pains should be taken to have the instructions of the Sunday School more directed to the *heart*. I am desirous to see more immediate and happy results; and unless we can witness our teachers and older male scholars professing and exemplary Christians, I shall suspect that we are not doing all the good that we ought by this mode of operation on the minds and hearts of the young."

Our correspondent at Keene complains of a want of success in keeping alive the interest of the class in question. "We have found it much easier," he adds, "to maintain a moral hold upon young ladies. It is more difficult to interest young men because they are more filled with the enterprises of the day and the anxieties of business. As to the means employed by us, they are not out of the usual course. We have had expository lectures and Bible classes, and the ordinary means of grace."

The letter from the pastor at Leominster is full of encouragement on this topic. "I have," says he, "as yet found no difficulty in keeping the older members of the school connected with it. There appears to be no desire on their part to leave it. There are about twenty male pupils in the school, who are from fifteen to eighteen years of age, and their interest in the school

appears to increase rather than abate. There are in the Bible class about twenty more male pupils from eighteen to thirty years of age. They appear very much interested in the exercises of the school. Our 'oldest male scholars' do not leave the school; and I trust never will."

In proceeding to account for the interest felt by these pupils in religion, he continues, "Our teachers are very devoted, punctual, and deeply interested in the school. When that is the case, I think usually, other things being correspondent, pupils will continue in the school. I meet all the members of the school over fifteen or sixteen years of age, on Sunday evening and deliver a familiar lecture on some moral or religious subject. Perhaps this tends in some degree to continue the pupils in the school."

From the minister at Concord, N. H., we have the following answer. "I have generally found the interest of the oldest male scholars very much as it was while they were members of the school. If they were truly interested then, they continue so; if not, I am seldom able to influence them more than others, except from a more intimate personal acquaintance, which grows out of my uniform, personal and entire superintendence of the school."

The pastor at Northboro', after speaking of the gratifying fact that many of their male scholars remain in the school longer than is usual, adds, "Whatever success I have had in this way, I attribute, under God, partly to the influence of our teachers' meetings, which have been attended by a number of persons of both sexes not actually engaged in teaching—partly to the many excellent books with which they are furnished by our Sunday School and other libraries—partly to the extra services which I have held especially for their benefit—but more than all to the aid and encouragement I have received from parents and teachers themselves."

We would suggest that more should be done to develope the religious affections of the male pupils in their earliest years. Would our young men become so indifferent, as they often do, to the Sunday School and to personal piety, after leaving their class, had they been previously confirmed in their faith? Could we impress the boy with the reality of spiritual things and make him feel the worth of soul-riches as much as he does that of silver and gold, it could hardly be that the pleasant tones of his teacher would all be forgotten the moment he came within the magic influence of the wheel and the hammer, of farms, houses, stores and stocks.

Our second question was this: "In what manner do you recommend children to spend the Sabbath?"

One of our correspondents remarks, in answer to this question, "So far as any specific advice is given, we recommend that the Sabbath should be more strictly and religiously spent than is the fashion among many at the present day. The reading of the Scriptures," he continues, "attendance upon public worship, and the lessons and exercises of the Sunday School, the perusal of religious works, as those relating to sacred history and biography, are some of the employments which are proposed to our pupils. The duties of private meditation and prayer are not forgotten.—The problem for us to solve seems to be, to unite a cheerful with a pious and profitable use of the day."

Another writes thus: "The day should be distinguished from other days. Not by destroying the inquisitiveness of the child, but by directing it to proper topics. Parents must direct the employments of the younger portion of the family. Social worship on Sunday we think one of the essentials of a Christian family. In this exercise, if suitably conducted, children would be much interested." He thinks that in many instances the older members of families "entirely disregard the

day, and either stay at home, or ramble in the fields, or do worse ; and the parent who permits such examples to be set before his children, is perilling their highest interests."

A third is in the habit, he informs us, of reminding the children of the importance of a circumspect and serious behaviour, during the exercises of religious worship, and has no doubt that his instructions, in this respect, have been with good effect. " I have uniformly," he adds, " enjoined it upon them to endeavor that their behavior in church and every where else be such, that it might be manifest they are scholars of a Sunday School."

It is not easy, we think, to decide how small children should occupy the Sabbath. Formerly they were compelled on that day to stay within doors, to sit upright in a chair, to read the Bible, and commit that and many hymns to memory. Should they, perchance, play a little or even smile, they were punished with the learning of an extra chapter or hymn. All this has passed away, and it is well that it has; for many a child has felt that if Heaven is to be, as they were told, an eternal Sabbath, and the day such as this, Heaven is a tedious, undesirable abode.

But are we not going too far in shunning this error? Is it not time that the pendulum should cease its extreme vibrations and settle down in a more limited movement? We think this a subject of great moment at this time. The more so because not a few, seeing, as they think, that our Sabbath does not rest on a direct divine command, are indulging in remarks, if not indeed in practices, in regard to this day, which give the young very loose, not to say irreverent, notions on the subject.

Our last inquiry was this: ' What is the comparative importance you attach, in the instruction of your scholars, to the External and the Inward or Experimental, evidence of the truth of Christianity? '

To this question our Leominster correspondent replies, "The importance I should attach to these respective evidences would vary with the age of the scholars. By the young the internal evidence alone is capable of being understood — indeed" he continues, "I do not think that the evidences of Christianity are to be taught at all to the young. Christianity itself is to be taught." Another letter coincides substantially with these views.. "We have never," are its words, "taught the Evidences of Religion in our School, except incidentally. Our time is short, and as we cannot do everything for our pupils, we had better make them practical Christians than skilful theologians, or subtle disputants. Still, if time, and interest, and circumstances favor, we should wish also to teach our older scholars the external and historical evidences of our faith."

The Pastor at Warwick, writes thus: "I have been in the habit of speaking of both kinds of evidences, yet have not been particular to make a comparative estimate of them. I cannot think that in Sunday School instruction it is necessary or expedient to speak of their comparative importance. They are both important."— We think our correspondent misapprehended somewhat the object of the question. It was not supposed that in any instance the scholar would be called upon himself to compare directly the two kinds of evidence. This all must feel to be quite injudicious. But we would ask the Teacher to which kind of evidence he attached the greater importance, and to which does he most frequently call his pupil's attention? We believe that every reflective mind does institute the comparison we describe. The teacher, if he possesses an ordinary interest in, and a capacity for, the subject, always forms his own estimate of the two kinds of evidence. We believe also, that his success as a pious and practical instructer, will depend much upon his views on this topic.

We have in one letter an opinion of the kind we particularly desired. Whether all shall assent to it or not, it is clear and decided. It is thus expressed: "I know of no evidence that Christianity is from God, except external evidence. I know that it is adapted to my wants, that it is good and true from the internal.—But I know the same of music and poetry. A truth which is adapted to our nature may be from God, but that fact is no proof that it is. It can be shown that this Religion is from God only by *objective* evidence. Because the building in which I dwell is adapted to my comfort and happiness, it is no proof that it was erected by God; neither is it a proof that Christianity is from God, because it is adapted to my wants."

Another may think that when we find this religion to be suited to our inward wants, and to be "good and true" we have some proof of its divine origin. We cannot but believe that two Sunday School teachers holding these opposite opinions on this subject, must differ somewhat in the manner, spirit and success, of their respective teachings. Which will do best we leave for others to decide.

Copies of our last Annual Report were addressed, during the autumn, to several gentlemen abroad, and many were given them for distribution. We are happy to state that three replies are now in our hands. One came to us indirectly from Rev. Mr. Wellbeloved of York, (Eng.) He writes in a tone of discouragement. "Many attempts have been made,—at intervals during fifty years," he says, "to establish a Sunday School in connexion with our chapel, but with no permanent success. We are surrounded by bigots of every description, who can exercise such influence over the minds of those who are not indisposed to place their children under our care, that in every successive attempt that we have made we have been foiled." It should be said, in-

connexion with these remarks, that the Sunday Schools in England are, so far as we can learn, exclusively for the children of the poor. They are not, like ours, parish schools, embracing all the children in the Society. This circumstance presents a great obstacle, in some cases, to their success, and explains also the indifference to this institution abroad, compared with the general interest felt in it here.

From Rev. Mr. Tayler, of Manchester we have received a letter, giving us gratifying accounts of the state of the Sunday Schools in that place. There is one feature in these schools in which they differ from ours. It consists in the union of secular with sacred instructions. Mr T. has politely sent us a document which unfolds this method of teaching. It is the "Fourth Annual Report of the Lower Mosley Street Day and Sunday Schools."

The desire is expressed by our correspondent to give their schools a more exclusively religious character than they now have. For this purpose they have established a service to be conducted by the superintendent of one of their schools, for the express benefit of the children, every Sunday morning. To make this service the more instructive, the outlines of a systematic course on the first principles of Religion and Morality, on Scripture History, and on the evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, were drawn up and placed in the hands of the superintendent, to direct him in a choice of the subjects, on which he successively addresses his youthful flock. This plan is found to interest the children much, and great good is anticipated from it.

We have a most acceptable letter from Rev. Mr. Philp of London. "The reports from your different schools," he writes, "are very interesting, relative to School Libraries, School Teachers, and the proper books to be used. I can add my testimony to that of

the pastor, of the Suffolk Street Chapel, on the happy influence of these little books on the minds of those for whom they were not directly intended."

"Even the simple moral truths that are sung in their pieces, may, *do*, make occasionally a deep impression. When our children first began those exercises, some of the smaller ones would soon catch the air, learn the words, and take an interest and a pleasure in the exercise. One morning a man came to inquire what the children learnt that seemed to please so much his little one. 'Why,' he said, 'my little fellow, as soon as it is light, gets up between me and his mother, and he begins singing.

'Love your neighbor, live by labor,
Would you prosper, that's the way.'

"The man seemed delighted and perhaps learnt from this simple circumstance a moral truth of much higher importance than all the abstract, metaphysical and theological dogmas in the world. A few weeks since one of our little ones caught the small pox; while the disorder was in progress, he would often hum one of his little pieces; and not long before he breathed his last, he attempted to sing 'Hail, smiling morn,' and thus pleasantly passed out of this state of suffering to where the 'smiling morn' shall no more, be followed by the day of affliction, or the gloomy night of death."

Mr. Philp kindly sent us with his interesting letter, a copy of the Sixth Report of the London Sunday School Association, from which it appears that ten schools have joined the Association since their last anniversary. The Report from Bristol, after speaking strongly of the aid which Pastors can render to the Sunday School, thus notices the example of their own late minister. "All this was beautifully exemplified in the practice of our late beloved pastor, Dr. Carpenter, who, while in health, always showed the warmest interest in our Sunday Schools, often coming amongst us,

addressing the children, joining the teachers in their meetings, and in all ways that he could, and always with that gentleness and love, which drew all hearts to him, endeavoring to assist and encourage us in our labor."

We received from the same hand, the Fifth Report of the London Domestic Mission Society. This institution is closely connected with the Sunday School, which in England gives instruction not only on the Sabbath, but sometimes in the week. Mr. Vidler, one of the Ministers of the Poor, speaking of their great distress, says, "Children are usually cared for in the midst of these difficulties. The vulture has been fabled to feed its young with its own blood; many mothers among the poor do this almost literally. I was conversing a short time ago with a woman whom I have visited for years, and whom I sincerely respect. She had not earned more than five or six shillings a week for many weeks, 'but,' she said, with a feeling of thankfulness, 'the children have had bread.' And how had this been accomplished? She had herself gone without bread while they went regularly to school with their usual quantity. A noble example this. May American mothers thus prize the means of moral and spiritual education.

In turning to the condition of this society for the past year we have to notice an unusual activity and success in its operations. Fifteen hundred copies of our last Annual Report were printed and distributed, and the same number of Mr. Waterston's instructive Address. The Society has held three public meetings, in addition to the anniversary, — more, we believe, than in any former year, — and they were well attended and productive of much good.

We gave notice in our last Report of the appointment of Rev. F. T. Gray as the Agent of this Society. He entered on his work, and has prosecuted it with

great zeal and success. We learn from his recent Report to the Directors, that during the past year "the following Schools have been visited and addressed, by himself, and by others at his request, viz., those in Warwick, Northfield, Athol, Marlboro', Northboro', Rowe, Billerica, Lancaster, Ashby, Dedham, Brighton, Bridgewater, Norton, Hingham, Lowell, Scituate, Watertown, Brookline, Needham, Concord, Waltham, Framingham, Danvers, Marblehead, Taunton; in Peterboro' and Keene, N. H., and Providence, R. I., being 28 in all. In these schools there were, 4,033 children, and 658 teachers. Nearly 1200 miles were travelled in order to visit them.

It may be added that, at Marlboro' the Agent met the Worcester County Association of Sunday Schools; and at Rowe that of Franklin County. Your corresponding secretary met at Peterboro', N. H., the Cheshire County Sunday School Association. There are 12 Schools connected with this association; 9 of which were reported on that occasion. They contain 1133 children, and 294 teachers; and were represented as, for the most part, in a prosperous condition. The libraries were increasing; teachers were more punctual than formerly; the practice of each school making an annual report to the parish with which it is connected, had been tried and was warmly recommended by some of the Reports.

The whole amount of money contributed for the agency is $104 94. It was received from the following towns, Lancaster, Quincy, Concord, Watertown, Ashby, Warwick, Norton, from Keene, and Peterboro', N. H., and from the twelfth Congregational Society, the Federal Street Church, and the Howard Sunday School, in Boston. The expenditures for the agency have been but $25 39, leaving a balance in the fund of $78 55.*

*See note at the end.

Our Agent remarks, that the visits made by himself and others, met with "a hearty welcome, and had convinced him that much good may be affected, and a deeper interest awakened in Sunday Schools by means of the agency." "The most striking and encouraging effect resulting from the agency," he continues, "has been the interest it has awakened in parents. In every case where the Agent has visited a second time, the number of adults has been much larger at the meeting; and they have been ready to leave their various employments on a week day, and hasten with their children to the house of God. In many cases parents and children have walked two, three, and even five miles to listen to the address from the Agent.

We find two important suggestions in his Report. The first is the following: "It has occurred to your Agent that it would be well for the Society to consider the expediency of having life members. In this way the teachers and parents would have an opportunity of testifying their affection and regard to their pastor and to the superintendent of the Sunday School, by making them life members of the Sunday School Society.

The other point is this. That of procuring tracts suitable for distribution by the Agent among the children of the schools he may visit. This has been done by him, but not to the extent desired, as enough could not be obtained. The avidity with which they are received and the pleasure with which they are spoken of afterwards, render it a subject that should be faithfully considered by the directors of the Society."

We believe this agency is destined to accomplish great good in our cause. We earnestly hope that it may receive increased attention from all the friends of the Sunday School. Contributions have already been made to our funds for this purpose, wherever desired. May they continue and increase until our means shall

be such that every school may be cheered and blessed by the visits of a faithful agent.

We believe that a new interest is now everywhere felt in the great objects of Sunday School instruction. It gives us pleasure, as we notice the recent death of the lamented chief magistrate of the Union, to state that he was a friend of the Sunday School. He manifested the sincerity of his interest in it by his personal services. We are told that he had charge of a Bible class up to the period of his leaving home for the capitol. An incident is related of him which shows that, after he was elevated to the highest office on earth, he was mindful of the spiritual wants of the young. One of his last recorded sayings, previous to his mortal sickness, was on this point. His gardener was tying up grapes, when he advised the President to purchase a dog to guard the grapes against boys who might take them in church-time. "Better," said the President, "get a Sunday school teacher to take care of the boys; the grapes will then take care of themselves." Yes, what are all outward defences, compared with inward and spiritual guards? If this nation is to be saved, it must be done by the arm of Religion. The children must be trained up in that fear which is stronger than ordnance and battlements, and more mighty than all penal enactments, "the fear of the Lord." To that great Being, good as he is great, who has kindly fostered our institution through the past year, we commit it for the future. In this pleasant spring-time, we would cast in liberally the seeds of knowledge and piety. He whose field is the heart of a little child, has a pledge from the Lord of the harvest of an unfailing increase.

In behalf of the Directors,

A. B. Muzzey.

Boston, May 26, 1841.

NOTE.

LEWIS G. PRAY, TREASURER, IN ACCOUNT FOR AGENCY, SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

RECEIPTS.

Aug. 29,	1840.	By Cash.	Lancaster	Sunday	School.	17 00
Oct. 6,	"	"	Quincy	"	"	3 00
Oct. 22,	"	"	Concord	"	"	11 00
Oct. 24,	"	"	Watertown	"	"	5 70
Oct. 24,	"	"	Ashby,	"	"	11 03
Nov. 11,	"	"	Warwick	"	"	5 00
Dec. 12,	"	"	Keene	"	"	6 25
Dec. 12,	"	"	Peterboro'	"	"	7 75
Dec. 12,	"	"	Norton	"	"	5 50
Feb. 3,	1841.	"	Federal Street	"	"	10 25
Feb. 21.	"	"	Twelfth Cong.	"	"	12 27
March 2,	"	"	Howard	"	"	8 19
March 3,	"	"	Federal Street	"	"	2 00
						$104 94

EXPENDITURES.

Sept. 20,	1840.	To Cash.	Lewis G. Pray.	1 75
Sept. 25,	"	"	H. Clapp, jr.	2 00
Sept. 25,	"	"	Rev. F. T. Gray.	9 50
Oct 6,	"	"	William A. Weeks	4 89
Dec. 12,	"	"	Rev. A. B. Muzzey.	6 25
April 26,	1841.	"	Rev. F. T. Gray.	2 00
				$25 39
		Balance of the Agency Fund,		$78 55
				$104 94

ADDRESSES.

AFTER the Report had been read the Rev. F. T. GRAY, the agent of the Society, rose and moved its acceptance, and remarked in substance as follows:

Mr. President, — It gives me much pleasure on this occasion to move the acceptance of the Report. At the conclusion, mention is made of the agency established during the last year; and the service which has

been performed in that connexion by myself, as agent, and by others who have assisted me in that good work. In rising to make this motion, my object is simply to state, that wherever I have gone as your agent, there has been extended to me, the ready hand of welcome; the most hearty reception; and the earnest and grateful expression for the duty performed. In this respect there has been but one feeling manifested everywhere; and this has greatly tended to strengthen my belief, that the agency is truly appreciated; and if rightly used, must be an instrument that cannot fail to be productive of much good.

One of the principal points to which my attention has been directed, is to its influence on the parent. The Sunday School needs their aid. It cannot be extensively useful without it; and every means which can be brought to awaken their attention to the importance of moral and religious instruction, must be of great advantage to the growth and welfare of the institution. It has gratified me, therefore, more than any thing else, to observe, that where your agent had been more than once, there he has witnessed a manifest increase of interest, and a more numerous attendance on the part of parents. The previous visit had evidently been the cause of arresting their attention; and leading them to feel, that this work was one of deep importance, — not to the teacher or the child only, — but to themselves also, and more greatly. The consequence has been, to produce a willingness on their part to forego, it might be, a day's or a half day's labor, or in fact any secular engagement, that they might avail themselves of such an opportunity to understand the importance of that duty, which connects them with their offspring in a religious sense, — as children of God, and the heirs of heaven.

Mr. Gray further remarked, that he was not in the spirit of saying much at the present moment; but he

could not close, without expressing the deep interest he continued to feel in the cause of Sunday Schools. This interest was not growing cold or indifferent. On the contrary, he remarked, that every day was adding something to the depth of his convictions as to their importance, not only to the taught but to the teacher. This very day, said he, I have been called to the dying bed of one of my teachers. And that, too, such a death-bed! So calm — so resigned — so full of faith — hope — trust: But three months ago, hardly so long, and this young man was in the flush of health and activity. He was found at his Sunday School class constantly — his pupils clustering around him with the fondness of filial affection — although himself but twenty years of age — receiving from his pure and pious lips the rich instructions of the Gospel. But in the morning of life, and just as he was entering upon the pathway of usefulness — useful he was in other relations beside the Sunday School, especially to a widowed mother,— he is suddenly arrested by sickness. The lingering hand of death is laid upon him. And how does it find him? murmuring? alarmed? unprepared? O, no! but ready to go; grateful for the instructions of the house of God; sensible of the benefits derived from his connexion with the Sunday School, reposing in Jesus and upon God his Heavenly Father. Calm — collected to the last, and yielding up his spirit full of humility, confidence, and love. Such is the death-bed of the Sunday School Teacher! He has gone, we may confidently trust, to receive the award promised to those who are faithful to the end.

Rev. Mr. Frost, of Concord, followed Mr. Gray, and said: —

Mr. President,—Having been requested to make a few remarks at this meeting, I did not feel at liberty wholly to decline. But thinking that short speeches

are best on occasions like these, I shall endeavor to say what I have to say very briefly. I have been highly pleased with the prominence that has been given in the Report, and likewise in the labors of our agent, to the direct effort for cultivating the *religious* nature of the child. This I am persuaded is the deep, the crying want of society. There is much education, there is much refinement, there is much religious knowledge; but the sentiment of piety does not pervade and give a tone to society. This education and refinement is consequently to a great extent hollow and superficial. The sentiment of religion lies at the foundation of all excellence. I speak of religion in its highest and widest sense. As there is but *One*, that is good, in the highest sense, so there is but one principle of Divine goodness, and that is religion. It is the highest sentiment of the soul. It raises it above every thing sinful. It connects it with God, the infinite source of goodness. This is the holiest sentiment of the heart. It hallows all other sentiments. Truth becomes truer, friendship more sacred, goodness more tender and deep. It hallows the meanest condition in life. The chamber where the poor, forsaken woman is breathing out her soul so sweetly to God, the little cottage where the "Dairyman's Daughter" held such high converse with her Maker, the hovel, where the incense of morning and evening worship goes up with such deep sincerity from the godly family; every such place is the very gate of heaven to us. We cannot pass by it, or even think of it, without being awed and elevated.

This sentiment is also the strongest in our nature. When thoroughly awakened, there is nothing that it will not enable the soul to bear and to do. I have seen it conquer the habits of a life of sin, the cravings of intemperance, the most violent passions, apparently without an effort. The peace and joy it brings soothe these cravings. It breaks the power of temptation.

How can he relish the poor enjoyments of sin, who has so much sweeter enjoyments within? How can he thirst for outward greatness, who feels the divine reality in his soul? There is not one in this assembly, so highly endowed, so accomplished, that if destitute of this sentiment, all these accomplishments are not hollow and superficial. There is not one so ignorant, so humble, that if the heart is touched with the sentiment of a sincere piety, the loftiest and best mind in this assembly would not delight to commune with that individual.

The heart in its natural state, *i. e.* in its unperverted state, is also full of this holy sentiment. It is one of the most delightful views of our peculiar form of faith, that it enables us to look on the infant soul, not with the weight of hereditary guilt pressing on it, not with the doom of an accursed race to weigh it down, not with an innate depravity, to make it love iniquity more than holiness; but that it comes from the pure hands of God. His Son has said that of such is the kingdom of heaven. The heart of childhood is tremblingly alive to the religious sentiment. It overflows with awe and love at every manifestation of the wonders and goodness of God. This sentiment rises and checks the utterance, at the sight of every generous deed, of every noble character and every exhibition of divine mercy. And the whole outward life is fitted to awaken and cherish this sentiment. The outward world, with its change of seasons; the daily experience of life, every trial and every mercy; the truth of the Gospel falling like the light of heaven, all awaken this holy sentiment, and lead the soul to the throne, to the very bosom of Infinite Goodness.

If this is all true, why then, it may be asked, is there so little religion in society and in the world? The answer is short, and it is but too obvious. It is education. We all know its power. It makes the only difference between the wildest savage of the rudest tribe,

and the gentlest being in one of our most Christian families. And what influence has education on the culture of the religious sentiment? Alas! it is almost wholly opposed to it. On setting out in life, a thousand paths are presented to the child, a thousand voices invite this way and that; and too often, scarcely one friend, not even the *parent* points to the 'strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life.' While almost every other sentiment is daily exercised, *this*, the life of all excellence, is left dormant, except when it forces itself up from the deep fountains of the soul, or when it is awakened by some striking scene of God's works or providence, and then its expression is repressed. No wonder that it seems almost to die out in a multitude of instances and is so low in society.

It is to supply this *crying want*, that Sunday Schools were instituted. It is to take the child by the hand, and lead it, at the outset, into the strait and narrow way; it is to awaken this sentiment of piety, so high that it raises the soul above every thing that is mean, so holy, that it sanctifies every feeling and act, so strong that it controls the passions and overcomes the world, and so lovely that it sweetens every blessing, even the hardships and sufferings of life.

And the means are scarcely less holy than the end. It is to act on the young mind by kindness and love, to set before it the brightest examples of excellence, to open the spiritual meaning in every flower and animal, and in every event of life; to unfold the great truths of the Gospel, until they lay in the mind like so many points of light by which to walk in this dark and uncertain world, and to see far into the infinite beyond.—What young man or woman, what person still more advanced in years, and in knowledge, and piety, does not desire to engage in such a work? Who can look on society and not wish to give it a higher moral tone? Who can think of the temptations that await the young

in life, and not wish to strengthen them for the hour of trial? Who can think of the happiness there is for the pure and pious souls on earth, and not wish to lead the young into those green pastures and beside the still waters? Who can see the young growing up around him and not wish to connect them to him by some holier ties than the formalities of society? It is surprising that any one can hold back in a work like this. And yet there are in almost every society, many, the most enlightened, the most influential, the most pious perhaps, who will stand and look on, and see a handful of teachers, most of them with less talents and attainments and social influence than they possess, struggling to promote these blessed objects in the Sabbath School without so much as raising a finger to help, or a voice to encourage them. If there are any such in this assembly, I would appeal to you, my friends, as you desire the spread of religion on earth, the happiness of the young, the honor of God, to come into the Sabbath School, turn the whole force of that social influence, which is so readily given for worldly purposes, on the side of religion. Come in, until the whole weight of talent and social influence and piety in each congregation is combined in this work; until an enthusiasm is awakened in children and youth, aged and middle aged, for piety and spiritual excellence, such as now exists for wealth and honors. So long as there is one child in any congregation waiting and desiring to be made good and holy; or who may be *made* to desire it; and so long as there is one person more capable than the rest, or capable of doing anything, if others will not, to save that child from ignorance, from temptation, from a life of irreligion, I see not how such a one can answer it to society, to that child, to God, in the great day of accounts for such a neglect of duty.

GEORGE BEMIS, Esq., of Boston, then rose and spoke as follows:

Mr. President,—There seems to be one topic more, particularly deserving attention this evening, from the place which it occupies in the Secretary's Report, and the manner in which it has been touched upon by some of our friends who have preceded me. I allude to the Agency of our Association. As I understand its objects, sir, it is not intended for mere sectarian purposes — to imitate other denominations who have already instituted the same thing. Nor is it an organization for the mere purpose of organization — to collect statistics, and to furnish opportunities of judging for ourselves of the outward prosperity of our cause; though this result, if no other followed, would be, doubtless, highly advantageous. Still less is this agency designed to control the free action and independent management of the separate Sunday Schools. I believe the most sensitive jealousy can hardly take exception to it on this score.

But is there not, sir, something in the idea of the *machinery* which it involves, which, in some degree, renders it objectionable, and which it is worth while to consider, before giving it our final and decisive sanction? I apprehend there are many of our friends present, who, if they would speak their sentiments on this point, would have something like indifference, if not of positive dislike, to express towards it on this account. They object to having Sunday School instruction put upon any less simple basis than it now rests upon. They fear that whatever is gained in the way of system and organization, is so much lost from the benefits of that direct and intimate intercourse of teacher with pupil, which they believe is the essential element of religious instruction. Feeling deeply that it is this individualizing of the teacher and the taught — this free communion of heart with heart, which beathes the breath of life into the Sunday

School scheme, they deprecate having their attention called off from the work immediately before them, to a great system, and to general results. Their own feeling, when engaged in the ordinary discharge of their duties, is, that they wish to be alone with their class, hardly to remember that they belong to a school, much less to think that they are embraced in a grand plan of combined action, and are to look to that for the help which can come only from their own spirits.

I have great sympathy with these views, sir, for I have had some such feelings myself. But a little different view of the matter, a little further reflection will perhaps convince others, as they have me, that these imagined evils need not necessarily result from this agency — that it has nothing of the mechanical, or merely systematic character about it, and that it seems to be naturally called for, and the genuine growth of our present plan of Sunday School instruction.

The common experience of every teacher seems to furnish an analogy to illustrate this. One may say, without any very deliberate division of the matter, that there are three stages in the religious teacher's progress — the first, when he labors for his own good — the second, when he adds to that the good of his class — and the third, and highest, when laboring as a good teacher, he tries to help others to become good teachers also. This gradation takes place in the most natural manner possible. When one first thinks of becoming a Sunday School teacher, it is almost always from the motive of mere self-improvement. Something is sought to be done to satisfy the craving of the soul for benevolent action, and the Sunday School is laid hold of, because it is the nearest field which presents itself. The teacher feels conscious of no particular interest in its employments, and of no peculiar fitness for its duties; but still he may do something towards fulfilling his duty to his fellow-creatures, and striving to benefit himself.

So he engages; and, as might be expected, hardly effects more than his own good. But by and by he discovers that another method of proceeding is necessary to make his labors of any avail to others. He finds that he must sink the thought of himself, and project himself, as it were, into the characters and dispositions of his scholars before him — that he must forget to look upon them as abstractions, but to think and feel for them individually, so earnestly that no other motive remains in his mind, but the ardent longing to meet their wants, and help on their good aspirations. Now he begins to value means and methods. Now he searches for the greatest chords of interest, and the most lasting bonds of attachment. He goes through all the experimental trials of awakening curiosity, and stimulating interest, till he makes the grand discovery, that love, untiring, overflowing love, is the master secret of religious instruction, and spiritual help. And then, having their souls in his keeping, like clay, he may mould them to what shape he will. He has found out their heart-strings, and he may bind them to God and to duty, irrevocably, if he pleases.

And yet, beyond this advanced stage of progress, there lies a further field of improvement, wherein the religious teacher may go forward. When he has reached the state we have just supposed, how naturally springs up the wish to communicate to others, the precious experience which he has gained! How highly does he feel that *he* should have valued at an earlier date in his vocation, hints, such as he is now able himself to impart! How does he burn with the desire to see the flame which he has kindled in his own Sunday School circle, light up and glow all around him! Does it not seem as natural for him to seek next his fellow-laborers, and help them to do their work, as it is for him to labor, and till his own field in the first instance?

This view of the single teacher, it seems to me, explains the object of the associated action which we are

considering to night. We desire that the improvements which any of our schools may have made over others, may be generally known. Whole schools, like single individuals, may have reached a much higher degree of religious progress than others, and we wish that of their fulness may be communicated to the others' necessities. There need be no feeling of superiority involved in the matter. There can be none. But in the spirit of a generous exchange, one school will say to another, "These are our excellencies — if you have greater, freely share them with us — if not, use these in common." Particularly in this connection, should it be borne in mind, that we who are present to night, are not consulting in this matter for ourselves alone. Most of the meeting present, are perhaps from the city, or its immediate vicinity. And here, where the means of communication and intercourse are so easy and frequent, less necessity, perhaps, is felt for the medium of mutual exchange through an agency, than elsewhere, in more isolated and remote situations. But the plan proposed is for the benefit of our Sunday Schools everywhere, the distant as well as those nigh at hand. We cannot say which will be helped most, but certainly, the schools which feel the necessity least, will not hesitate to do their share towards affording a word of sympathy, and a hand of assistance to their less favored friends and co-workers.

One other thought I will throw out before leaving this subject to others. It seems to me that if we need any argument from example, to recommend the plan in question, we may easily find it in the analogy of the Common School Agency established in our own State. If any benefit has been derived to the cause of intellectual education, from that valuable and praise-worthy scheme, why may we not look for corresponding advantages from the same measure in religious education? I do not say that the parallel is perfect, but who can

doubt that if a system of interchange of ideas, and reciprocity of benefits has advanced the cause of intellectual knowledge among us, that an exchange of sympathy and kind offices will do as much for the progress of religious and spiritual culture?

Rev. Mr. Fox, of Newburyport, succeeded the last gentleman, and made the following remarks:

Mr. President,—Now that I have risen to address this meeting, I am at loss what to say, not on account of the want, but on account of the multiplicity of topics which such an occasion might suggest. I am not called upon to defend the Sunday School, for none of its opponents — none who are indifferent to its welfare — are here. I do not feel disposed to indulge in enthusiastic eulogy of the Sunday School, for of this it has already received enough, and perhaps more than enough, ever since its establishment. I am afraid it has suffered rather than gained from the too unqualified praises bestowed and promises made by its ardent friends. It is time to take calm and sober views of its nature and office. The Sunday School is now a fixed institution, and our efforts should be mainly put forth to insure its constant improvement.

It is known to you, perhaps, that I have been disposed to regard the Sunday School as a valuable means of doing good. Allow me to state why I esteem it so highly. It is not because I regard it as necessarily a good thing. It may — in some cases I fear it is — quite otherwise. Where it is the place to bind the fetters of a sectarian creed on young hearts and minds — where its exercises are only the cold recitations of lessons from manuals — where it is not pervaded by a fervent and religious spirit — it is useless — nay, worse than useless. But it may be made — in most cases, I trust it is made, an agent of no little force in the promotion of uncorrupt

Christianity. *We* regard the religious sentiment as a part of man's original constitution — *we* believe that man's spiritual nature is to be developed, like his intellectual nature. In this doctrine, I find laid the foundation, on which, as it seems to me, *we* are bound, by the principles we profess, to build the Sunday School. Our churches are established to educate the religious nature, and should they not make provision to begin this education early? We know how soon the freshness, and docility, and faith of childhood, is injured by contact with the world. Ought we not then to endeavor to introduce the young, as soon as possible, into the spiritual world, that they may be protected against the delusions of earth? Consistency, I think, obliges us — our idea of Christianity — our philosophy of man — obliges us to look upon the Sunday School with favor. It should be found receiving the countenance and generous support of pastor and people in every parish, as an ally of great service to the instructions of home and the instructions of the pulpit.

But we want good Sunday Schools? How shall we obtain such? I have time to answer this inquiry only in relation to one thing. A friend once delivered an address to the Sunday School Association in my parish, which he began with this assertion, "The teachers are the school." Including the pastor among the teachers; and that sentence, it seems to me, ought to be engraven on all our hearts, as pointing out the true doctrine in relation to the prosperity of the institution in whose behalf we are assembled. "The teachers are the school." As are the teachers so will be the school. This teachers should remember. They should labor to get a true idea of their work, and then execute it. What is that work? The religious education of the young. How is it to be done? By study, by thought, by patient toil. I wish to insist on this. Those who engage in the Sunday School ought to do so, calmly and deliberately,

and with a determination to make their office permanent, not for a few Sundays, or a few months, but, as it were, for life, should they enter upon their Christian work. They should feel too, that this work is one requiring continued preparation for its faithful discharge. The philosophy of religious culture is not to be learned in a day, or understood instinctively. The young spirit is not to be comprehended in a moment. To obtain clear ideas of Christian truth, and to communicate those ideas to children, so that they shall hold dominion over their souls, and direct their lives, is not to be done without labor. The Sunday School teacher should therefore make up his mind to toil — to toil hard and patiently.

In this connection allow me to say one word in regard to teachers' meetings. I regard them as the normal schools of the Sunday School, and as very essential to its welfare. They ought to be frequent, and carried on so as to receive mutual improvement. Every teacher should feel as much bound to attend them as to meet his class on Sunday. All the teachers, moreover, should be ready to do their part, by a free and ready exchange of their views, and the results of their experience, to make them as interesting and useful as possible.

Give me a Sunday School, in which the pastor takes a deep interest, and the teachers are studious, constant and punctual — in which the children are visited at their homes — and in which every thing is pervaded by the idea of the regular religious culture of the young, by the communication of Christian truth, and endeavors to make the character of Jesus *the* guide of life — give me such a Sunday School, and in it I see an agent of great power, working for the regeneration of the world.

My remarks, Mr. President, have been entirely extemporaneous, for only a short time since did I think of speaking. I wish they were more worthy of the occasion. But they may serve at least as a feeble ex-

pression of the interest I feel in the cause we have met to advance.

Rev. Mr. Lothrop, of Boston, then addressed the meeting as follows:—

Mr. Lothrop said he rose simply to express a single thought, and should not occupy the attention of the meeting with any attempt to illustrate and unfold it. I was much impressed, Mr. President, by all the remarks made by my brother from Newburyport, Mr. Fox. Every one must admit them to be just and true. I was particularly interested in what he said respecting the feeling with which the Sunday school teacher should enter upon and regard his duty and office; that he should look upon it as a *permanent* work; not as something which he had undertaken for a short time, while it was convenient and agreeable, but as something permanent, an office he meant to discharge while health and strength permitted, a means of usefulness and of religious influence to be used throughout his life. In harmony with this remark, I would urge the importance in a Sunday school teacher of a spirit of calm, determined, persevering faith, in opposition to that spirit of confidence and extravagant expectation on the one hand, and of despondence and discouragement on the other, which is so frequently exhibited. Every one, who has had much experience in Sunday Schools, knows that commonly the teacher enters upon his work with extravagant expectations of success. He is moved to it by a benevolent impulse. His feelings and imagination pourtray it to him in bright colors. He thinks it will be an easy and delightful, as well as a glorious and noble thing to take a young immortal spirit, in the freshness of its innocence and purity, before the world has seized and marked it for its own, before evil and selfish passions have corrupted and betrayed it, and mould it to Christian virtue and piety, establish it in Christian prin-

ciples and affections, form it in temper and character to a resemblance of Jesus Christ, and a meetness for the kingdom of heaven. With these feelings and expectations he is at first zealous and earnest in his work. But he soon finds it is not so easy, and consequently not so delightful as he expected. He does not meet with the success he anticipated. He finds indifference, inattention, and sometimes even obstinacy, where he looked only for docility, interest and devout attention. He has to contend with difficulties and obstacles, which were not taken into the account. He cannot always reach the hearts of the children under his charge; he cannot get that hold on their affections, exert that influence over their characters, so impress their minds with a love of God and goodness as he expected. He is discouraged and disheartened. He thinks he is laboring in vain because he sees not the fruit he anticipated. He feels that he is doing no good, that it is useless for him longer to engage in the work, and despondent and sorrowful he goes to his superintendent or minister to resign his office. Is not this a true representation of the course of feeling and conduct of many who engage in Sunday School teaching? But this is not the spirit in which this, or any work of Christian benevolence and usefulness, is to be undertaken and prosecuted. That should be a spirit of calm, determined, persevering faith, — faith that is not discouraged or disheartened by difficulties and ill-success. As a minister, I know well what this feeling of discouragement and despondence in the Sunday school teacher is, and can sympathize with it. I know very well, and presume most of my brethren know very well, what it is to labor and see not that fruit, those results produced, which we desired and anticipated, and it is because I can sympathize with it, that I would discountenance and contend against this feeling of discouragement. Once, Mr. President, when a Sunday school teacher

came to me to relinquish his class because he felt that he was not doing any good, and was discouraged, — I said to him, "Do you suppose, my friend, that I am never discouraged, and that I am perfectly satisfied with the results I am able to produce, that I see all the fruit of my labor I could wish? No: There are moments when I could almost say with you, I am not doing any good, when I feel as if it were useless for me to labor longer in a cause, which I cannot promote and advance as I would like. I do not seem to reach the hearts of my hearers or make that impression on their minds, or cause religion to exert that transforming and controlling influence over conduct and character, which is the high aim and the richest reward of my office; I feel discouraged and disheartened. But I know that this is an unchristian state of feeling, and contend against it. I know that it is unbecoming in me as a man, a Christian and a minister to yield to this despondence; that I ought to go on resolutely and zealously in my work, planting and watering, leaving it to God to give the increase in his own good time, and such increase as seemeth to him best; I feel that if in the great day of account, it should appear that one soul had been saved by my instrumentality, that the character and destiny of one immortal being had been determined and his moral and spiritual happiness secured by any effort or influence of mine, this would be sufficient to repay me, to repay any man for the labor of a life, for the toils and sacrifices of the most devoted ministry. In this spirit, in this hope I persevere. Go back, my friend, said I, go back in this spirit to your class. Be not discouraged because you seem not to be accomplishing all the good you wish, be willing to strive to do all the good you can. Remember that if you can exert a happy influence over one child of the many who come under your instruction, mould his character to Christian virtue, and help to determine his immortal destiny, this alone will be suffi-

cient and more than sufficient to repay you for all your efforts and sacrifices as a Sunday school teacher." And I am happy to say, Mr. President, that this person went back to his class, in this spirit; and has since been a more cheerful, resolute and persevering teacher, and as a consequence, I believe, a more successful one.

What I would urge, then, upon Sunday school teachers is, the importance of this spirit of calm, determined, persevering faith. Let them not be discouraged because they witness not such results of their efforts as they could wish. Let them be assured God never paralyzed an arm laboring in the cause of virtue, or left utterly fruitless efforts and sacrifices made in the cause of human happiness and salvation. Let them persevere and be faithful unto the end; let them continue to plant and to water in calm and holy confidence that sooner or later God will give the increase of rich and abundant fruit.

Rev. Dr. Nichols, of Portland, being present, rose and made a few remarks. We regret our inability to present them in his own words; but in substance they were something to this effect: That being present, he could not withhold his testimony in favor of the institution in whose behalf we had assembled. He had been a careful witness of its operations for many years; and the more he saw of its influence, the more impressed he was with its value in giving aid to the growth of piety among the old and the young. In his view, the principle of faith was the one which needed to be strengthened, and called out in the breast of every human being. It was faith that gave fervor to every other principle. It was slow perhaps in its growth; but was mighty, when once it had found a lodgement in the soul. The Sunday School was well adapted, in his view, to cultivate this vital principle of the heart; and he would call down upon it, the best of heaven's bless-

ings. It had his most hearty wish for its prosperity: and he hoped the Society would be encouraged to go on in their good work, extending the power of religion to the young in every corner of the land.

Rev. Mr. Giles, late of Liverpool, England, spoke to the following effect:

Of Sunday Schools, in relation to the moral or intellectual wants of this country, I am not able to speak, nor if I were able, is it, in a meeting like this, required of me. What I have to say, has reference principally to the need of them in England, and the work they are doing there. The speakers who have preceded me this evening, alluded earnestly and eloquently to the necessity of cultivating in Sunday Schools the higher sentiment of our spiritual nature, but in the English Sunday schools, there is, in addition, the necessity of communicating the very elements of knowledge. To a large extent there is no alternative, numbers must receive secular, as well as spiritual instruction on the Sabbath, or be consigned ever to hopeless ignorance.

Sunday Schools in England, are made an inevitable need by poverty. Millions in England are born to labor as they are born to death, to the necessity of toil as to the necessity of existence. There is no retreat from their doom; it is certain as the sun, and stern as the night. The wants of life come with the experience of life itself; parental affection has no indulgence from parental poverty, and childhood has no escape from the hard heritage of a world that for it contains no play ground. This is painful, but the fact exists, and our statement adds nothing to its evil. We wish it was otherwise, yet no wishing will make it so. We are sorry for little heads bent down in weary wakefulness, that should be resting on their mothers' bosoms; we are sorry for tiny limbs, staggering from the lodgings to the loom, to which nature would have given the free-

dom of the fields; we are sorry for hearts faded, that should be filled with gladness, and for eyes dim with tears, that should be dancing with merriment. But our sadness avails not. Necessity commands, and what she commands she compels. Six days it is their fate to labor; the Sunday School gives them, on the seventh, the means to learn. What then, would be the condition of these, without the Sunday School? What but dire and desolate ignorance, but stupidity and vicious degradation. And yet the fields and factories of Great Britain are filled with these toil-doomed children; to their orphan souls, the Sunday School is often as the gate of heaven, and the house of God. True, and pity 'tis true, that vice and ignorance cover a space, which such instrumentality can never wholly purify, but it is something to save even a few from a social perdition. But I ought scarcely to say a *few*, for the number is not inconsiderable, over whom the Sunday School has impressive and benignant power. Blessed spirit, this, of Christian instruction, this quiet tenderness, which enters the infant heart, guides its dawning thoughts, and quickens its little hopes; this patient wisdom which bears with the rude and awkward struggles of youthful feebleness; this purity of zeal which sanctifies the affections it trains, and breathes a soul of goodness into every acquirement with which it enriches and refines our nature. Great is this work and holy. Great in that best kind of enthusiasm, which not only wishes, but labors for the redemption of the human soul. Great in its results in that future which it prepares for every coming generation, those worlds of mind filled with new energies and new thoughts, with which it will people the desert that now lies before us.

The want of national education, is another circumstance in English society, which casts a great portion of the poor on the Sunday Schools for all the knowledge they receive. If I repeat here ideas I have expressed

in speaking before in this city, blame me not, for to me they are so sadly familiar, that I cannot avoid their repetition. In the want of national education, England stands alone among the nations who are now earning glory for themselves by works of wisdom. Prussia, by her enlightened zeal in the cause of popular instruction, has given dignity, even to despotism. France, by a like zeal, has added new lustre to liberty. Switzerland, against her mountains, has consecrated independence by intelligence, and given to her sons the freedom of the soul with the freedom of the soil. Scotland, in her bleak and barren wilds, has nurtured under lowly roofs, that spirit, which, to use the eloquent figure of Curran, soars to the blaze of every science, with an eye that never winks, and a wing that never tires — and your own country has more security for glory and for greatness in her common schools, than in a coast of fire, and ramparts on a thousand hills. England punishes crime severely, and until recently, she punished it terribly, yet her masses have no available provision given them to know differently, or to do better. There is no sin where there is no law, and there is no law where there is no knowledge; penalty, therefore, which precedes all means of knowledge, is not justice, but cruelty. Now, every day, and example after example, makes it manifest, that the majority of criminals are from the ignorant — if so, the nation which makes no embracing effort for popular regeneration, has called upon her own head the double guilt of the popular ignorance and the popular iniquity. Our laws are not for remedy but revenge; laws of terror, that fall most heavily on the most helpless and the most tempted. Britain taxes for penalty, but there is no tax for prevention; she builds the prison, and, ignorance supplies the crime to fill it; she rears the almshouse, and ignorance spreads the poverty that never leaves it empty.

In reference to primary instruction, England has been

most callous and most careless. Absorbed in every pursuit which grasps and gathers material wealth, she has been insensible to the nobler treasures, which lie buried in the souls of her youthful poor, treasures that out-value all the Potosis and Golcondas of the world, as the stars, in glory, outshine the tapers of a pageant. Chemistry has been applied to analyze physical compounds, experiment results in discovery, and discovery in improvement of manufactures. Mathematics have become embodied in mechanics, and machinery has almost risen to creative power; astronomy goes forth in navigation on the trackless sea, and commerce returns burdened from every shore of earth; yet amidst this maze of movement, minds by thousands are wasting of intellectual famine. Science is good; arts and arms are good; machinery and money have their value likewise; but MEN are worth them all. The accumulation of capital, and the energies of trade have, in their way, a worthy purpose, but it is a worthier purpose still, to quicken the popular understanding, and to reform the popular heart. And in these days of turbulent and convulsive emotion, no reform has the radical importance of this. The power of the people is now uncontrollable, except by that wise self-government, which exercised reason and conscience only can promote. Popular power has been felt, and they who wield it now understand its resistless strength. Popular power has been in the battle against tradition, authority and privilege, and to the extent of the contest, it has been triumphant. Popular power is henceforth to be a mighty element in modern society; it is more important than ever, that it should be enlightened, and enlightened to the full compass of its trust. The Sunday School, according to its ability, has supplied the absence of a larger system. Limited in opportunity, it is little, however, of direct education, which institutions of this kind can impart, but that little is a spark which kindles a great fire.

The want of Common Schools is not merely itself a shame to England, but all that perpetuates it is a shame; that sectarianism, which will have no unity, but the unity of bondage, and permit no culture but a training for its fetters; that narrow spirit of party, whose selfish policy is always with power against principle, and for monopoly against equal rights and equal good; that apathy of rulers, which is disturbed by no anxiety except for its own supremacy, and cares nothing for the best interests of human nature, if its own low wishes are secure. In the conflict of such potsherds with potsherds, of church, cabinets, and cabal, the voice of the poor is unheeded, and the cause of the poor is scorned. But amidst this din of controversy, amidst this clashing of violent tongues and evil tempers, the Sabbath School, in conformity with the Sabbath which consecrates it, has been pursuing its mission in peace, and like the Christianity to which it is devoted, that mission is gratuitous and universal. A vast quantity of voluntary labor is thus enlisted in the cause of God and man; the highest minds in the community are brought into benignant contact with the humblest, and a bountiful blessing rests upon both. Each church is busy in its own sphere; sect emulates sect, one compels another, and all contribute to the great result. Much, no doubt, is mingled with all this that is not perfect; as in other of man's doings, much that is wrong in spirit and wrong in purpose; still a mighty good is done, and we have reason to rejoice. Rays from heaven gleam upon the heavy night of beclouded souls; the empire of darkness is invaded, and if not subdued, it is at least, divided; many a path in life is made smoother, many a home is rendered brighter, many a quiet blessing is distributed over the country; many a thinking peasant is trained for the field; many a wise mechanic is prepared for the city; many a virtuous parent is raised up to dignify and enlighten the retired dwelling.

Sunday Schools in England are not only achieving a great work, but they are preparing the way for a greater. They are clearing the field for universal education, breaking down barriers, and creating desires for knowledge, that will not, and that cannot be repressed. A most formidable obstacle to the instruction of the young existed in the character and condition of the parents. That the Sunday School has done much to obviate or remove, which the offer of week-day instruction could have never reached. The child's support was to parents a burthen on their indigence, which they were unwilling or unable to bear; the child's earnings a temptation they had no power to resist. Parents, besides, untaught themselves, regarded with no horror, the desolate souls of their offspring. Moral apathy, united with the obstinacy of constitution, and ignorance, arose almost to actual opposition; and this opposition, grown stronger by poverty and selfishness, was often made worse by the ordinary attempt to remove it. Arduous, therefore, was the object to be effected — to excite a thirst for education in the face of low interests, gross appetites and sordid passions; it was a formidable task, but the Sunday School has done much to master it. It is the nature of action, in a right direction, with every advance, not only to acquire fresh facility, but to throw forth new impulsion; to stagger one opposition while it hurls down another. The Sabbath lecture, which took nothing from the gain of the parent, stirred irrepressible longings in the spirit of the child, longings which have grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength. The superiority of moral energy to brute life has been felt; generous desires for progress are spreading, and as they spread, kindling a wider flame; the consciousness of ignorance covers its victim with shame and confusion of face; intellectual tastes are beginning to grow, not only in the earnest and emulative spirit of the boy, but are taking root also in the stubborn

habits of the adult; young men and maidens, the married and the mature, have learned the magnanimity to be docile; in humble and patient hearts, they have set themselves with a noble diligence to supply the wants to which the selfishness or the neglect of others has consigned them. In the vineyard of the Sunday School has been sown a little plant, cultured in quietness and watered in silence; it is now of pleasant promise, and shows forth a noble growth; at first, the slightest tread might have crushed it, but now it has struck its roots, and daily grows loftier and broader; its beauty increases with its strength, and thousands find shelter and salvation beneath its branches. No power, either for evil or for good, stops in the circle of its own agency, and so with Sunday Schools. The lisped lesson on the form has thronged the library in the vestry; the vestry has generated Institute and Lyceum; the Sabbath teacher has opened space for the public lecturer, and the simple class has swelled into the majestic audience. The light glows from the mountain tops to the valleys; from the broad plain to the sheltered path; the sun rises higher in the sky, and falls upon the cottage roof as well as upon the lofty temple.

With all the evils that beset our age it has many tendencies to lift us up in hope, and not the least of these is the growth of right appreciation. Every Christian preacher dwells with eloquence on the elevation which the gospel gives to woman, but not less is that which it gives to childhood. An appreciation this, which realizes with peculiar force that love of Christ to children which seems a very breathing from his heart of hearts — a sympathy for innocence and weakness in their most endearing beauty. The gospel truly is the religion of the child. Christ truly is the teacher of the child, the great and the first public teacher who consecrated childhood. Other teachers there were, they were great, and wise, and eloquent, but they spoke to men and

loved the applause of the mighty: Christ alone came to the simple, Christ alone took childhood to his beating breast and clasped it in his loving arms. The Sunday School is therefore eminently Christ-like, and is a ministration of the gospel touchingly in the spirit of the Master. In other agencies Christian goodness shows forth its solemn power; in this it manifests its kindest tenderness. In other agencies its work is to be done amidst sin, and darkness, and sorrow for the wretched and the wicked; but in this it labors in delight and hope for the guileless and the gentle. This, too, is the only agency wherein its truest excellence is conformity to the object for which it toils. Christianity goes in the strength of its deathless mercy to the gloomiest dens where sinful poverty lies in filth and famine: Christianity pierces the dungeon where hardened or humiliated crime consummates the drama of transgression, in apathy or anguish: Christianity sits in sackcloth and ashes with the lonely culprit through his last of earthly nights, supports him in the awful vigil and accompanies him to its fearful close: Christianity with a brave spirit, with a faith mighty and magnanimous, traverses the ocean and the desert, endures all climates from the tropics to the poles, seeks the savage in his lair, fronts the Pagan Pontiff before his jewelled idol, and often rears the standard of the cross in the ashes of its martyred missionary; humanity in all these it meets in ruin and it meets in conflict — in childhood only, it finds humanity the mirror of itself. In this age of moral activity, and moral beneficence, we behold the heart of Christendom putting forth its world-wide affections in countless societies; in this anniversary week, in this city, we are now surrounded by these various bodies animated by the common spirit of gospel sympathy and gospel benevolence; yes, the heart of Christendom is beating with strong and mighty pulse; but a groan of that heart over some want or wo of our species sounds dolefully through

each of our assemblies ; each is a voice of supplication proclaiming in its own tongue the universal reign of guilt and grief: their collected utterance is a Pentecost of charity, but it is also a Pentecost of misery: cries are around us : they are near and they come from afar ; — they come over the wide, wild sea, from the bleak mountains, from sunny isles, from frozen wastes ; they come from regions of spiritual famine, from regions of spiritual abominations ; they come from the field of war, from the blood-stained scaffold, from the retreats of indigence, from the Pandemoniums of intemperance : each in thrilling eloquence implores salvation for the lost ; the Sunday School alone asks preservation for the unfallen, — alas, if they are not long so, it is because the powers of the wicked are early in their industries of evil : the more imperative on you is it, to be still earlier in your work. Let the unpolluted shrine of God be guarded — let that guardianship be as cherubim with swords of fire at the gate of Eden, not to flash against the banished but to consume the destroyer. We hail all these agencies of Christian philanthropy, of collective compassion. We hail them as the spirit of Christ going forth in manifold apostleships of grace and goodness. We hope they will enlarge their borders, until effort shall become embodied in effect, and gospel dominion be as wide as gospel desire. If that day indeed shall come, blessed are they who shall see it. Brightly shall the heavens shine, and greatly shall the earth rejoice — even afar off our faith exults in the goodly prospect ; — prisons with little but echo in their cells, criminal tribunals vacant, and the voice of condemnation silent — war banished with all its sanguinary machinery, and ruinous expenditures, and deep died iniquities, tranquillity spreading over Christendom in truth and virtue, brows clear with intellect, consciences pure, and hearts at peace : altars holy and homes secure, knowledge growing into wisdom, and wisdom rising into godliness ; the good, the

generous, and the beautiful, opening in all their fulness on converted souls. May these come, and why should they not? The manly and the martyred have not lived in vain; the visions of prophecy have not been empty dreams; all our noble and far-seeing expectations are not the phantoms of a night, the shadows of a cloud.

I have spoken these things to you in faith and freedom. I have thrown myself upon your attention with confidence, and I feel that my boldness is justified. Though of separate and distant climes we are not of separate and distant interests. Our cause is the same, our country is almost so, for as Coleridge has said, the true relations of country are not in locality, but in kindred, in language, and in religion. We are of common origin, we speak and feel in one noble and capacious tongue, we are united in the same holy and humanizing faith. Here if men are true to themselves and to their privileges, glorious things may be achieved — not for wealth, merely, or power, or empire, but for humanity. Principles and not provinces are the proper grandeur of nations — with these they live and with these they die. Here principles have a wide field and a free course, and to this region, numbers of the right-minded over earth turn with eager eyes and anxious hearts, as to a land of promise, an arena of boundless anticipation for the progressive destinies of our species. May they not be disappointed. May truth in its regenerating power increase its dominion from heart to heart and clime to clime, until the nations of the world shall be the kingdom of Christ.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

1841.

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At a recent meeting of the Society, the following article was made a part of the Constitution :

Art. 12. The sum of Ten Dollars paid into the treasury by or for any one person, shall constitute him a Life Member of the Society.

Extract from the Report of the Agent, Rev. F. T. Gray.

" It has occurred to your agent that it would be well for the Society to consider the expediency of having Life Members. The suggestion has struck many very favorably, as by this means the teachers and parents would have an opportunity of testifying their affection and regard to the Pastor and the Superintendent of the Sunday School by making them members of the Sunday School Society."

THE

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH AN ABSTRACT OF THE

ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-FIFTH OF MAY, 1842.

BOSTON:
SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS.
1842.

BOSTON:
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REPORT.

NEVER since the formation of this Society, (whose fourteenth Annual Report is herewith presented,) has there been greater need for all the influence it may exert. The past has brought valuable experience, and the future opens a wide field for continued exertion.

Within the last few years the whole subject of education has met with a consideration more in proportion to its inestimable importance. The wisest and best minds have devoted their strength to elevate the character of the Common schools. Neighboring States have entered upon a similar work with a noble zeal, and made, for the accomplishment of their object, munificent appropriations.

In our own State the same spirit of public enterprise has been manifested. Statesmen and philanthropists have sought to give permanency to our institutions by striving to elevate the public schools, so that they may diffuse sound knowledge and virtuous character.

The increasing spirit of interest which has been exhibited in behalf of the common schools, is interesting in several points of view.

Who can say how much of the interest which has been shown, has been awakened by those who were first interested in religious education? Consider the

number of teachers engaged in our Sunday Schools — the number of pupils and parents, and also the clergymen who may thus have been led more closely to consider the influence of culture upon the mind and its necessity through the community. Is it not reasonable that a true interest in Sunday Schools should awaken an enlightened interest in all the means of diffusing truth and knowledge, and in thus giving a right tone to the public mind in regard to the whole subject of education?

There is also a counter effect. As the public mind is aroused on the subject of Common schools, the energy that is awakened and the light which is diffused will not be wholly expended upon *those* schools, but will diffuse itself over the spiritual as well as the intellectual branches of education. When the public mind is looking with intelligent interest to the best means of imparting general knowledge, it will naturally turn with a kindred feeling to the means of its religious culture.

There will be a constant influence exerted from one side to the other, and the mind which is truly interested in the one will feel interested in both, and will feel that the public welfare demands that each should be properly sustained. Can any one consistently feel enthusiasm for our system of public instruction and at the same time turn away with indifference from the grand idea of imparting Christian truth and awaking the soul to its highest duty and life?

If Sunday Schools are the mere tools of a party, and only established to rivet the chains of sectarian prejudice, and to fasten upon coming generations antiquated dogmas and creeds, then the enlightened friends of education may look upon them with dread, for, established in this spirit, they would be an outrage upon the good sense of the community — calculated to retard Christianity and blight the energies of the race. But if they are intended to give a healthy moral culture, to impart a knowledge of valuable religious principles, to leave the

mind to a real freedom of thought and a catholic charity for all. If their purpose is to awaken devotion to God and inward spiritual life, then they are the safeguard of civil and religious freedom, and man can hardly overestimate their incalculable worth.

We see that for the improvement of our common schools, Boards of Education are established, County Conventions called, Lectures delivered, and valuable documents published and widely circulated. Shall not a kindred interest for the spiritual welfare of the young lead to as noble efforts for the improvement of our Sabbath Schools? The Secretary of the Board of Education in his last Report, in speaking of the numerous conventions which have been held, says — "These meetings which have been held for five successive years in the counties of the State, have been eminently useful in diffusing information, as to a better system of school organization, and better modes of instruction. Especially, by bringing the sympathy of numbers to bear upon individuals, they have diffused a spirit and created an energy, more worthy of a cause which carries so much of the happiness of the community in its bosom."

Why may not the Sunday School teacher gain as much from quarterly and monthly meetings, which might be crowded with interest and made to diffuse abroad new spiritual life. Let teachers neglect such opportunities or meet them with languor and indifference, and the whole cause deteriorates, but let such gatherings be universally encouraged, let every mind come to impart and to receive light and warmth, and the effect must be most perceptibly realized. As the best methods of instruction are investigated and the real importance of a teacher's duties understood — the teacher's responsibility will be felt, and the necessity of proper qualifications allowed.

This has been so emphatically true in regard to our Common schools, that a systematic course of preparation, to qualify teachers for their office, has been appointed by

the government of the State. And schools have been opened to give peculiar privileges to those who would fit themselves for the high duties upon which they desire to enter. Should there not be some preparation for the Sunday school? For those who would teach the highest truths? Who would explain Scripture, and impart the first and most abiding impressions upon the most sacred themes? Should not every clergyman invite around him the teachers who may instruct the young of his flock, and impart to them of his greater knowledge and more extended experience. Thus might the teachers' meetings be for them, (as indeed they often are,) what the Normal Schools are to others — and might not teachers also form themselves into private mutual classes for religious improvement, and the study of the Scriptures?

"To prepare himself for his proper duties, says the Secretary of the Board of Education, any person who is worthy to fill the sacred office of teacher, will study and meditate; he will seek information from all sources, and daily replenish and fortify his mind with the most elevating and sustaining motives."

The Board of this Society feel justified in saying that a want of something more than we yet have is widely felt. That good as the schools are, the standard is rising, and a desire for improvement is openly and strongly declared.

In a communication received from the Superintendent of a school in a neighboring town, it is said, "We have every reason to be gratified with the state of our school, still there is room for much improvement, *very* much, before it becomes what we would like to see it. I have great faith in what may be accomplished by continued exertion. We only want increased zeal on the part of the teachers, an awakened interest on the part of parents, and more assistance from our pastor."

"The first and most important requisite," says a correspondent from Leicester, "towards improving the condition of our Sunday schools, is the acquisition of a su-

perintendent filled with the fulness of God. The character of teachers also should be more elevated, and the suspended animation of the Teachers' meetings should be roused and quickened into increased vitality. There is now too much sluggishness and inertness."

"That our School," says a correspondent in Dorchester, "is doing some good we trust, but that it is doing all the good it might we are far from believing. Much, very much depends upon the character and qualifications of teachers, and doubtless we feel in common with others, the want of pious, self-devoted teachers, whose whole hearts are in the work. I would not imply that we have none such, or that we are in this respect inferior to other schools. I should be doing injustice to say so, but the responsibility of a Sunday school rests so much upon the teachers, and its character is so shaped by them, that it is of the highest importance to secure such as are suitable. Would we advance the welfare of a school, we must begin first by exciting an interest on the part of the teachers."

A writer from Leominster says, "We need teachers who know the value of the truths of the gospel and who can teach them from experience."

"A teacher to accomplish a good work," says a correspondent in this city, "needs a heart for the work, an undaunted faith, a deep piety and a fervent zeal; these operating in the soul, will enable any teacher to succeed."

"We feel," says the superintendent of the school at Charlestown, "that we can safely say that the condition of our school is good. But still we have often been led to think there is a failing in Sunday school teaching, which is not peculiar to this school alone, but which we are convinced from inquiry and observation, is existing in many schools, and amongst those connected with all denominations, and this evil is a too mechanical method of teaching, a too close adherence to manuals — we feel

satisfied that this mode of instruction prevents that exercise of the pupil's mind, which is so essential to develop the peculiar traits of their character."

"We want," says the superintendent of the school at Cambridgeport, "an increase of humility and devotedness among superintendents and teachers. We have not attained yet that degree of humility and devotedness which will do more than any thing else, (God's blessing excepted) to increase the usefulness of our schools. If the humility becoming a Christian finds a place in the heart and is joined to a conscientious devotedness to this self-denying task, so that the task is felt as a pleasure, then self-improvement, adequate knowledge, enlarged capacity, will naturally follow."

"I fear," says a writer in Philadelphia, "that the *object* which should be ever had in view in Sunday school instruction is not so much a deep and settled conviction in the minds of teachers, as it should be. I think *efficient*, *faithful* and Christian teachers, are needed to increase the usefulness of schools. I hope the friends of Christianity will not suffer this institution, now that it is established, to become a *formal one*. But that they may be awakened to its importance and come forward to sustain it. It seems to me," says the writer, "that if the high purposes to be accomplished were dwelt upon with more earnestness, it would do much to draw out, and enlist many in the ranks of teachers, who are eminently qualified, and who now excuse themselves from participating in this interesting and important field of labor."

"We want more teachers," says a writer in the interior of this State, "upon whom we may rely, as devoted and persevering, apt to teach, and imbued with the spirit of Christ. We want more systematic co-operation and sympathy among our teachers. We need a deeper and more practical interest manifested for the Sunday school by all who have named the name of Christ.

By all who value truth and goodness, and who prefer right to wrong. In truth, we might say that the greatest want, after all, is more enlightened views in regard to the whole subject of the religious education of the young."

These extracts serve to show the views which are entertained in different parts of the country by those who have opportunities of personal experience. It would be inferring more than is just, to conclude that the teachers now engaged are unworthy of the office they fill. As a body, the teachers of our Sunday schools are distinguished for their intelligence, their devotion, and their faithfulness. But they feel their own responsibilities and desire an increase of power. They are generally the first to engage in works of benevolence and the last to forsake any post of duty. They are most powerful co-operators with the ministry and warmest supporters of the gospel cause. But with all this they feel their need of continued progress and extended information.

Might not Teachers' Meetings often be made far more instrumental of good than they now are? And might not some clergymen, generally give more of their thought and labor to the improvement of teachers? Might not teachers themselves do more, by *lending mutual aid?*

In this city the Quarterly Meetings of this Society have not accomplished all that we could have wished. A new spirit seems however to be now abroad — and monthly meetings have lately been commenced which are to be held in various sections of the city, and to which are invited all the teachers connected with our schools. These meetings now seem to be sustained with great spirit, and promise to be productive of extensive good.

Let teachers feel a desire for improvement and a thousand avenues to it may be opened. Let teachers desire more spirituality of character, and with proper effort they will attain it. Good and intelligent as our teachers are

they begin as a body to feel such a desire — and new life seems already bursting out, not only among teachers, but through the whole church.

There is a vast difference, in different societies, in regard to what is done to awaken interest. In some places there are *no* meetings among teachers, and the clergymen never meet the teachers to impart to them instruction. In others there are regular monthly meetings, and in others meetings every week.

We find a great difference also, in different towns and villages, respecting the age of those who are taught. Some schools are composed wholly of children, while in others there are classes of adults of the age of from twenty to sixty. This latter characteristic we consider a happy feature in any school. And could not Bible classes of adults with advantage be formed in almost every society?

Having spoken upon the state of things at home, your attention is invited to a few extracts from foreign correspondents.

The Sunday schools in Great Britain are generally confined to the poor — and they labor under the disadvantage of gross popular ignorance. The privilege which we enjoy in our public schools, are unknown abroad.

In a letter received from Charles Dickens, whose interesting description of Little Nell, and pathetic story of Oliver Twist have done so much to excite sympathy for the young, both here and in his own country, he says, "I have a deep and strong interest in children, and in all creatures who appeal through their helplessness to our gentleness and mercy, in children most especially. They need more friends in England than they have."

In a letter from one* who devotes his time to the improvement of the poor, in London, it is said, "You have not the evil of such excessive poverty to contend with which afflicts English society. Where a people are struggling for food, it requires much to arouse their atten-

* Rev. William Vidler.

tion to moral and spiritual duties. If I understand aright, your people do not need elementary instruction, that being provided for by the State schools, with us Sunday schools mitigate the want of a national education. It is not uncommon for us to admit children fourteen years of age who hardly know their alphabet. We must teach them these things, though we endeavor to introduce as much as possible instruction of a moral and religious nature. We have some pupils who have been with us more than six years, and we believe we have done much in forming within them good moral feelings and habits."

A correspondent in Bristol says, "We do not forget your Society, and assure you that we are anxious to maintain our present friendly connexion therewith." After some further remarks, he says, "There is not among our *young men* so much recognition, of the great duty of every man to do *something* towards aiding others. Yet the signs of the times are promising. Self-culture is becoming more practised, and we cannot but hope that with the *attainment* of knowledge will come the desire to *impart* it."

"By means of a Bible Class and a Discussion Society, we are able to keep our eye on many of the young people who have *left* the Sunday schools."

In a letter from Miss Mary Carpenter, daughter of the late Dr. Carpenter, who devotes much of her time to the Sunday schools established by her father in Bristol, and all of whose generous labors will, we trust, be crowned with abundant success, she says, "I give lessons weekly to the boys and girls alternately, on Natural History, and it has been gratifying to observe the lively interest manifested by the children, and the accuracy with which they recollect the information given. We trust that it will be beneficial for them to acquire an interest in pursuits which can hardly do otherwise than tend to good, when the contemplations of the works of God lead to admiration of his love and wisdom."

"We do not think it expedient to give direct lessons

on Natural History on Sunday, though we not unfrequently speak of the wisdom and goodness of God as manifested in creation, and bring before them objects illustrating religious instruction."

"There is one among many points connected with Sunday schools, on which we should much like to have your experience; it is, whether the scholars remain connected with you as a religious body after they leave the school, and whether you continue to exercise a moral and religious influence over them."

"We desire to enter into a fuller communication than has been hitherto done, with the schools on the other side of the mighty water. We feel a peculiar interest in all that is going on in our sister country."

In a letter from Rev. James Martineau, of Liverpool, he says, that the Society with which he is connected supports two *daily* schools where two hundred scholars are taught. They are instructed by a salaried master and mistress, superintended by a class of voluntary visitors, who not only watch the progress of the whole school, but at certain hours engage themselves in instructing a portion of the scholars. "As minister of the congregation," he adds, "I also attend the school in the capacity of visitor, and undertake the scriptural instruction of the elder children of both schools. On Sunday morning the children attend service at my chapel; and for an hour and a half before this are engaged with the visitors in reading, reciting hymns, and in other exercises designed to be especially religious. In the majority of cases, the habit of attending church does not exist in the families that furnish the materials for our schools, and they are glad, by committing the children to us on the Sunday, to secure the formation of a practice of which they have not the example at home. The schools are *free*, and the children are of the poorest class. This is the class for whom schools are, in this country, considered as providing. They are created here in order, with a wise economy, to

use for purposes of instruction as well as worship the only day which, even in the case of childhood, can be rescued from labor.

"In all cases here, the Sunday School comprises only the poor. In the language of your reports I think that I discern traces of quite a different notion of the institution prevalent in America. Its aim seems to be, to collect together all the children of a congregation for the purposes of devotional culture: so that your schools, I imagine, contain, in each case, all ranks but only one sect; while ours compose all sects, but only one rank.

"The children of the girl's school we endeavor to keep in view after they have quitted us, and entered into their situations of more responsibility. For three years they come back to us at our annual anniversary, and if the reports of their conduct and disposition are favorable, they receive a present in testimony of the satisfaction of their former instructers, the last and highest gift being always a goodly Bible. On this occasion an address is delivered by the minister to the assembled parents, teachers and children."

The Board would present but one more extract from their foreign correspondence. The letter is dated Belfast, and the writer says:

"I am happy to inform you that of late an interest in the cause of Sunday schools has greatly increased among liberal Protestants through Ireland. Although surrounded with difficulties, greater efforts have lately been made for the mental, moral and religious improvement of our community, and in this important work, the education of the young has justly demanded our first care, as thus the seeds of knowledge and righteousness may be most readily and most effectually spread. To receive an occasional communication from your Sunday School Society, respecting its condition, experience, and publications, would be animating and instructive to us, and perhaps it would not be without

encouragement to your Society, (established and prosperous as it is,) to know that there are those, in a distant land, who are laboring in the same work, and who are interested in your success."

To return once more to our own country. Much has been accomplished in some places for the children of the poor and for convicts in jails and prisons.

The children of the poor demand more of our thought and care. Schools have been gathered by the ministers laboring in the West from among the destitute, in addition to the schools connected with their parishes. Interesting letters from Louisville and from Quincy, Ill.,* and other places, show what is doing at a distance, and many of us know that much is doing nearer home. But still, while there is one child of penury left uncared for, there is still room for extending our labor.

Sad spectacle for sympathy. Poor neglected ones — young wanderers perishing without a guide! Born in poverty, and left to neglect. Shall they so die? Or will the generous hasten to save them, and pluck them from their perilous sphere?

Many children have been left until, having ripened in years, they are now cursing society, or filling our prisons and jails. And these criminals, (who are so often what they are through the neglect of Christian communities,) shall not Christian communities do something to redeem? The convict — the despised convict, down-trodden and shunned, and treated with cold neglect or

* In a letter received from Rev. George Moore, who is laboring with great success and most earnest devotion in Quincy, Ill., he says, "Our Sabbath school continues to flourish. The children are very much interested, and we are now anxiously awaiting the arrival of the books which our eastern friends have been so liberal as to send out to us. With them we shall have the means of accomplishing much more good than we are now doing." In a letter since received, he says, "Our Sunday school is doing much good, and I am happy to think that now that our text-books have come, as well as many books for our library, its usefulness will be increased." The school at Quincy is a regular parish school, but the teachers have done much for the poor.

positive scorn ; — that abandoned, helpless creature! has, it may be, a tender heart; those iron features may gleam with life, and malice be converted to love.

Our views of sacred truth have a divine power to melt the sinful, and lead them to the Saviour of souls. Many a dungeon cell, has, through their instrumentality, become the Gate of Heaven.

The Board of this Society have received letters from the superintendent of the Sunday school in the Middlesex Jail and House of Correction, and from one who has devoted much time both on Sunday and nearly every day of the week, to the unfortunate inmates. This Sunday school has had under its influence two or three hundred, and has been able to accomplish much that is encouraging. "There are some dark and most pitiable manifestations (says the superintendent) of moral degradation and ruin. Though great intercourse with these convicts has led me to *pity* more than to *blame* them, I have felt that those who call themselves Christians have a heavy account to answer for."

A letter has also been received from a lady who has for many months devoted herself almost wholly to instructing and reforming unfortunate prisoners, and who has manifested the most Christian zeal and self-sacrificing perseverance; in a long and highly valuable communication (in which many impressive facts are stated,) she says —

"I am quite satisfied that attention may be arrested and secured from *all*, however corrupt, if the teacher manifests earnestness, self-devotion, self-forgetfulness, and a hearty sensibility to the value of truths presented. Go with the Bible for your creed, the example of Jesus for your example, and the grace of God for your help, and you cannot be an unprofitable servant."

"I could multiply examples, both of men and women, middle-aged and young, in the prisons, whom I do not merely *hope* or *suppose* have been made better, but

whom I *know* have been. Many are kept in view after they have left the prison, and the character manifested is enough to prove the efficacy of timely care and teaching. Rarely a day, never a week passes, but I see or hear from some of them whose souls have been kindled to higher aspirations, and whose lives seem to be guided by a sense of duty."

"It is eleven months since one of the convicts was liberated. She has done, and is doing, well. Not long since she sent three dollars, some expenses for her having been paid, saying, 'I know you have other charges for the prisoners. I hope you will not be offended if I ask to repay the expenses for my coming here. I have good health, and, thanks to you, good wages, and good friends. I hire a seat at church, and go always when I can be spared: I read the books you gave me, and long to see you.'"

Such are the labors of our friends in one of our prisons, and such are the efforts made by one of our number to redeem the unfortunate and criminal of her own sex. She has established a library in the prison, from which from one hundred and fifty to two hundred are weekly taken out. When the prisoners are released, she has voluntarily procured them places in the country, and, at her own expense, gone with them to the places procured. When there are many such spirits among us, "the word of the Lord must be glorified."

In relation to books, the Board are happy to say that several have been published during the past year, which they believe will be of essential advantage to Sunday Schools. They will, in this place, only refer to Livermore's Commentary, the first and second volumes of which are now before the public. No better commentary can be found for the use of Teachers or others.

There is one other subject upon which the Boardbeg leave to Report. THE AGENCY.

They look upon this, as one of the most important trusts connected with the Society.

One year ago, it was thought advisable to secure a number of suitable persons, who, free of compensation, would be willing to share the duty of visiting any school that might desire their aid, and thus, without imposing too heavy a burden upon any one individual, enable the Society to accomplish more in this sphere of usefulness, than by any other means. Accordingly, eight individuals were appointed by the Directors, as Associate Agents, namely, three clergymen, Messrs. Gray, Muzzey and Waterston, and five laymen, Messrs. Flagg, Thayer, Bayley, Jarvis and Pray. These gentlemen met and appointed Mr. Lewis G. Pray, as their Chairman, who has devoted much time to the work, and from whose Report to the Secretary, the following statements are taken.

Early in the year public notice was given of the readiness of these gentlemen to visit and address any School; communications were to be sent to the Chairman, who was to arrange the visits and share with the others in the performance of the common duty. Having restricted themselves by no limit, they have answered every call, however great the distance, or however short the notice.

Their visits have been extended to *five* States and *forty-two* towns.

Eighty-three addresses have been made at different Schools, and thirteen addresses to parents and teachers, separate from those to the Schools.

Of these visits and addresses, five were made by Rev. Mr. Muzzey, eight by Rev. Mr. Gray, and ten by Rev. Mr. Waterston, ten by Dr. Flagg, twenty-six by Mr. Thayer, three by Mr. Bayley, one by Mr. Pope, and twenty by Mr. Pray. Of the other addresses to Parents and Teachers, twelve were by Mr. Pray, and one by Rev. Mr. Muzzey.

Whole number of			Teachers in Schools visited,	1157
"	"	"	Pupils . . .	6883
"	"	"	Children addressed .	10,105
"	"	"	Persons . . .	17,620

The condition of all the Schools was prosperous, with the exception of two or three, which were small and feeble.

It is believed by the Board from personal observation, and from letters received, that much good has been done, and they look forward to the future with increased faith.

The Society have, during the past year, published three tracts for gratuitous distribution by their Agents.

An edition of "Overcome Evil with Good," of 3000; another of "Robert Fowle" of 4000; and another of "Little Things and Great Things," of 2000; making a total of 9000; at an expense of $67 00. They have distributed about 4000 of this number, or 57,000 pages. "These little gems of tracts," says one of the Agents, "have been invariably received with the greatest satisfaction and delight."

By the contribution of ten dollars any person may be made a Life Member of the Society. The following persons, twelve in number, have already been made Life Members by the contributions of the Pupils, or Teachers of their respective Schools, or by their own donations.

C. Gill, Jun., of Quincy; S. Adams, late of Saco; J. Osgood, Bulfinch Street School; Rev. F. T. Gray, same; P. W. Warren, Lowell; N. P. Hunt, Cambridgeport; Madam S. Holland, Needham; Mrs. Whitaker, Needham; E. K. Whitaker, Sup. Needham S. School; Deacon Martin Lincoln, Suffolk Street School; I. Tolman, Hancock Sunday School; and Elijah Cobb, Howard School, Boston.

The following Schools have made contributions to

the funds of the Agency during the year, namely, Walpole, N. H., Brighton, Mass, West Dedham, Bernardston, Deerfield, Rowe, East Bridgewater, and five dollars by a lady at Needham ; making $34 25.

Mr. Pray closes his Report by the following remarks. "The Agents would express with profound sensibility their gratitude for the manner in which their services have been received ; and for the personal attentions with which they have been favored. They feel it a duty to say, that they have not only been met with kindness and hospitality, but wherever their services have required a longer stay than a few hours, they have been made the guests of the minister, or the Parish, and admitted to their families as brothers and friends, and have received, wherever they have been called, the kind wishes and the prayers of the wise and the good."

In conclusion, the Board would only add, that the advantages flowing from such an Agency, are too palpable to need any comment here. We believe, that through its instrumentality, the Society has been more extensively useful than at any previous time, and its usefulness, if conducted with wisdom, will continue to increase.

In behalf of the Directors,

R. C. WATERSTON,
Corresponding Secretary.

Boston, May 25, 1842.

ANNIVERSARY

OF

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Anniversary of this Association was observed in the usual manner, on Wednesday evening, May 25th, in the Rev. E. S. Gannett's church, Federal Street. Seldom has a more interesting meeting been held in this city. The eldest children of four of our Sunday Schools were formed into a choir and occupied the organ loft and galleries, on both sides of the church. The other portions of the house, even to the aisles, were filled at a very early hour, so that many had to leave for want of accommodation. The Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, of Salem, presided. Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Thompson, of the same place; after which a hymn was sung by the children, commencing,

Come thou Almighty King,
Help us thy name to sing:

The Annual Report was then read by Rev. R. C. Waterston, the corresponding secretary, which is given at length in the previous pages. After the Report had been read, the following verses of an original hymn was sung to the tune, 'Away to School.'

The Sunday school, with joy so full,
We love it more and more;
Its precious hours, refresh our powers,
With strength unknown before.
Here truths, from purest fountains brought;
Here Jesus' bright example taught;
We're led to love, to look above,
Where we so soon shall soar.

To Thee! All-wise! our praises rise,
Our gratitude and love;
Thy kindly arm, saves us from harm,
Oh! still our guardian prove,
And when at last, thou call'st us home,
May teacher, pastor, parent, come,
With us to share, our Father's care,
In fairer worlds above.

Hon. Mr. Phillips from the chair, then addressed the meeting with great earnestness and effect. He alluded to the interest of the occasion. The Sunday school is no longer an experiment; its success has been put beyond doubt. The times show an increased interest and influence in respect to religion; much of which may be traced to these schools. Many present, he had no doubt, could respond from their hearts to this appeal, in confirmation of its truth. Undoubtedly there are still great wants. But now there is no want of children; parents are no longer opposed to this enterprise. The great practical question now is, how far have teachers, superintendents and pastors done their duty by this cause. The want of preparation for the work of a teacher is still felt, such preparation is a duty, but it also yields the reward of personal benefit. Superintendents and pastors have equal need to labor in their separate stations of duty, that the Sunday school may accomplish the great work it has to do. Mr. Phillips, in closing, having invited others to offer their remarks with the utmost freedom, the Rev. W. H. Channing, of Nashua, N. H., spoke.

The teacher, he said, should have no lower object than to call out the whole religious nature of the child; but to

do this he must himself have religious life. Then he will be careful not to pour in upon the tender mind too much erudition, nor to cover it over with doctrinal instruction. The mind of a child is placed in a body and surrounded by weakness, that it may grow. It must not be forced — not be subjected to hot bed culture. Childhood is the era of freedom, let religion sanction this freedom. We are too anxious to fence it in ; yet God meant it all for *prairie* growth. Childhood early learns the limitations and the restraints of life. He had faith in the *little* means by which God teaches self-discipline. He would give to children unbounded hope. Alas! how soon it was lost. When God sees a child *a child*, he sees it religious. He would have the child possess such spiritual power that it should not be ruffled by obstacles, but like the full, deep stream, when it meets the precipice, go over in one glassy bend of beauty.

After these addresses another hymn was sung, the teachers and children alternating the verses, beginning,

> Great God, accept our songs of praise,
> Which now with grateful hearts we raise.

Rev. W. G. Eliot, of St. Louis, Mo. ,then gave some account of his Sunday school, formed seven years ago, with ten scholars, seven of whom came from one family ; now the average attendance is over seventy. Books, and particularly New Testaments, were given the children who needed them. A New Testament Society was formed of those who paid fifty cents. Might not the Schools in New England form New Testament and Missionary Societies ? On Christmas and Fourth of July, the children have festive meetings, when each contributes not less than six, nor more than twelve cents, to be given to some poor person ; they are happy in the gift and interested in its appropriation. They have a library of four or five hundred volumes, which, after it has been read through, they propose to give to some

other school, more in want of books, which he had no doubt, the children in New England would be glad to replace. Their object is to make the Sunday school a place of action, and not of learning or talking merely.

Rev. A. B. Muzzey, of Cambridgeport, succeeded, and considered this a delightful occasion, whether he looked at the children above, or the teachers and audience below. The children *were* above us and he hoped they would always remain so. The Sunday school is the means of lifting up the latter as well as the former. It was a great and glorious work to raise the fallen; but the teacher should rejoice in the opportunity he has of saving the children under his care from contagion, and from falling, and on the bed of death he will be made happy by what he has done for others.

Another original hymn was then sung, to the tune of 'Life let us cherish,' one part of it as a duet, with thrilling effect.

To this sweet place, each child
With filial love may come,
And learn to rise above,
For heaven his home.
Oh, come then here where virtues bloom,
And shed around a rich perfume,
And where, like dew-drops on the flower,
Duties gild the hour.
To this sweet place, each child, &c.

Then life shall onward pass,
In this most blest employ,
And conscience, like a glass
Reflect our joy.
And when at last we reach the tomb,
Our Faith shall wreathe it with the bloom
Of that sweet plant, that ne'er can die —
Immortality!
Then life shall onward pass, &c.

The meeting was then addressed by Rev. M. G. Thomas, of Concord, N. H., who remarked, that the character of the teacher depended on his estimation of the office. Let him consider himself a co-worker with

the great Teacher Divine; and that as Jesus instructed his disciples, and afterward sent them forth to teach, — so must our pastors first prepare the laborers for their Sunday school, that they may become useful and successful teachers. — We regret that we can do so little justice to Mr. Thomas's admirable remarks. Their impression will long remain upon the minds of those who heard them.

Rev. S. Osgood, of Providence, R. I., next spoke, and wished the Sunday school should be considered a branch of the Christian church, and be conducted with a view to a church feeling — when each would care for all, and all for each. Laymen should take a part in this instruction. Young men are needed, the office of teacher is neither beneath nor above them; it deserves and requires the best gifts. Rev. A. P. Peabody, of Portsmouth, N. H., considered the results of the Sunday school, though great, as falling below what we should expect from the efforts and arrangements that have been made. The generation now growing up is not so much better than the generation which preceded it before the institution of these schools. Why is this? Because we have not fully understood the teacher's office. He should stand between the children and the temptations of the world. Many teachers have neither the seriousness of character nor the ripening Christian experience which are necessary to a performance of their duty. Heart-experience is as necessary for a teacher as a pastor. The office is in effect a profession of religion.

Rev. C. F. Thayer, of Beverly, remarked upon the importance of perseverance on the part of a teacher, and illustrated the point by citing the case of a lady, who was concerned in the establishment of the first Sunday school in New England in 1810, and who, for nearly thirty years, and to the day of her death, continued her interest and labor with great

success. As a proof that she did not labor in vain, he said he need only state that the gentleman who had just addressed the meeting, and who was now one of the most eminent divines in the church, had been one of her pupils. Such an example may afford us encouragement.

It being now past ten o'clock, the meeting was brought to a close by a farewell hymn, written for the occasion by a teacher, and sung by the children.

The time has come to part again,
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
May we this friendship e'er maintain,
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
With trusting faith and confidence,
And Christian love, we now go hence,
Adieu, adieu, &c.

O cherish well your Sunday schools,
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
Make children come and mind the rules,
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
Then when this time returns again,
The grace of God will still remain,
Adieu, adieu, &c.

Farewell, our friends, until we meet;
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
When joys on earth shall be complete,
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
Then we will join our songs above,
In praises of redeeming love,
Adieu, adieu, &c.

"We believe," says the Monthly Miscellany, (from which, and the Christian Register, this account has been chiefly compiled,) "it was a general feeling, that this Society had never held a more pleasant celebration of its anniversary. The house was crowded, and an new interest was given to the occasion by the presence of the teachers and children of four Sunday schools in this city, who filled the front seats in the whole extent

of galleries, and at intervals sung several hymns with great propriety and sweetness." And a secular paper, the Mercantile Journal, thus speaks of one portion of these services. "The children were stationed in all parts of the gallery, and as they sent up their little voices in unison with the solemn tones of the organ, in notes of praise to Him who is their Father and Friend, the effect was extremely pleasing, and well calculated to excite feelings of devotion in all present, and to awaken the deepest emotions of interest in the breast of every philanthropist and Christian. They sung several times, and we know not when we have been so much pleased with any portion of religious services, as we were with the songs of the children last evening. Heaven grant that the religious impressions implanted in their memories, may last as long as life itself."

BOOKS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

In publishing the following list of books for Sunday School, Juvenile and Teachers' Libraries, the Committee of the Sunday School Society are far from believing it to be a perfect one. Some probably have been omitted, which should have been added; and some have been added, which perhaps should have been omitted. But these have all been carefully read and examined, and they can truly say, that if many of them are of a character not so decidedly religious as could be wished for our Sunday School Libraries, there are none of them but may be read with interest and profit.

The list is large and includes the greatest number now in print, which are suitable for such libraries. Those having the letter (U) against them, are books published by the Sunday School Union, and may be purchased and used without further examination.

Such a list has been long desired, and is now published, with the Report of the Society, with the hope that it may facilitate pastors and superintendents in supplying their libraries with safe, useful and valuable books. It may assist them still further, when obliged to send, to know that the average price is not far from thirty cents per volume.

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COURSE OF INSTRUCTION.

* THE following Course of Instruction, prepared by a Pastor of a Church in this city, for the use of his own School, is transferred to this Report as one approved by the Society. It is not offered with the expectation that it will be followed out in all its parts, by any school, but it cannot fail, as they think, to suggest principles and modes of procedure, which must be highly useful wherever adopted.

3. The exercises of the School begin with a lesson from Scripture, followed by prayer and singing. After which, unless there be a general lesson, the classes go to their several pews and remain with their teachers till the close of the School, when they again join in singing.

4. A general lesson is given, usually, once a fortnight, by the junior minister, the superintendent, or some one of the teachers.

5. For the greater convenience and the more thorough character of the instruction, especially within the short time allowed, the classes are small; the number in a class, it is thought, should not, except for some good reason, exceed five.

6. In arranging the children in classes, regard is paid rather to their capacity and previous instruction than to age.

7. Instruction is given principally by means of conversation between the teachers and their classes. The Bible is the book most used, portions of it being read and explained, or being taken as subjects of conversation. Some of the younger children learn hymns, and the older scholars are taught from such books besides the Bible as their teachers may think most suitable.

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1. Teachers' meetings are held, except in the summer, once a month, or once a fortnight, as may be annually determined.

2. These meetings are held on Saturday evenings, from 7 to 9 o'clock, or from 7½ to 9½ o'clock, at the house of the junior minister.

3. The time of meeting is divided between conversation on the state of the School, discussion of questions interesting to the teachers of a Sunday School, and exposition of Scriptures or remarks upon the exercise adopted in the School.

A complete course of instruction for a Sunday School would embrace the following branches of study; and so far as circumstances may permit, the children should be carried through such a course, by beginning at the earliest age of which they enter the School with the first of these exercises, and leading them on successively to the last. It may be impossible to introduce or to maintain such an order of instruction, but the classes might be arranged and taught with reference to it.

I. Hymns and Sacred Poetry;

Passages of Scripture to be committed to memory.

II. Conversation between the teacher and the children — on

The spiritual nature of the child;

His relations to God;

His relations to his fellow-beings;

The dispositions that should be cherished;

The tempers that should be repressed;

The habits of speech and action that are proper or improper.

Such conversation would bring up various topics that fall under the general titles, of faith, and character. It should follow very much the direction given it by the child, who should be encouraged to ask questions, and not be suffered to remain a passive listener. Advantage may be taken of familiar incidents, of the occurrences of the week, or of facts borrowed from biography. Abstract teaching should be avoided, and truth be taught by illustration and narrative.

Catechisms may be used in this stage of the instruction. The best, probably, are Dr. Carpenter's, that prepared by Dr. Channing and Mr. Thatcher, and that published by the Worcester Association.

III. *History of Jesus Christ.*

In its principal facts only — without entering into criticism; using the New Testament as the only text book; presenting to the child the Savior's life and character in a manner suitable to his early age.

IV. *Notices of the principal personages of the Old Testament.*

The teacher may here give his class some brief account of Abraham, Moses, David, &c., with the story of Joseph, and other narratives which they would comprehend, and in which they might be expected to take an interest.

V. *Lessons from Nature and Providence.*

These may be given orally, but should be more systematic and extended than those which come under No. II. They should afford illustrations of the Divine power, wisdom, and goodness, as seen in "the things that are made;" of the Divine government as exhibited in the course of events; of human life and character as displayed in biography and history. Many of the facts of natural science might be profitably introduced.

VI. *History of Jesus Christ*—in full.

The Gospels should now be carefully read and explained. The life of Jesus should be studied by means of a Harmony — Palfrey's for example; his miracles, parables, and other discourses should be separately examined; and pains be taken to give the class as full an insight as may be into the character of Christ. Such a book as Ware's "Life of the Savior" may be used; and the teacher should prepare himself by the help of Commentaries and other works elucidating the meaning of Scripture.

VII. *Old Testament.*

Its history and biography;

The Jewish Law;

The devotional and prophetical books.

Portions of these several parts of the Old Testament may be read and explained, and some general views be given of the Mosaic dispensation, and the course of ancient prophecy. Perhaps nothing more can be attempted in a Sunday School.

VIII. *History of the early spread of Christianity, as related in the book of the Acts.*

IX. *The Epistles of the New Testament.*

Portions of these may be read, and the design and plan of each Epistle be briefly explained, according to the method recommended and adopted by Locke.

X. *Principles and duties of Religion.*

The teacher may now give moral and religious instruction in forms suitable rather to youth than to childhood.

He should explain the foundation and the elements of duty; should make clear the nature and propriety of faith; should show what piety is, its excellence, and the means by which it may be cherished; what morality is, its origin and authority; what the Christian character is, how it may be acquired and strengthened. Such a book as Ware's "Formation of the Christian Character," or the third part of the Geneva Catechism, may be taken into the School, but it is better that the instruction should be given in conversation.

XI. *Doctrines of Christianity* — absolutely.

The teacher may exhibit and illustrate the doctrines of the Christian faith as he understands them, without any notice of other opinions; his object being to give his class a view of the religious belief of a Christian, as he gathers it from the Bible.

XII. *Doctrines of Christianity* — controversially examined.

The object is this, the final part of the course would be twofold — to *prove* the justice of the statements made under the last head, and to show the erroneous nature of opinions which may have gained currency. This however should be done with great discretion, and with a view to relieve the mind of the pupil of difficulties with which it may be embarrassed, and not make him either dogmatical or sectarian.

If after leaving the Sunday School the children should attend a course of exercises with their minister on the following subjects, they would at its close have been carried through a thorough course of religious instruction.

Evidences of Christianity; Natural Religion; Sacred Geography; Moral Philosophy; Ecclesiastical History; History of Religions.

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Communications to be addressed to Lewis G. Pray, 39 Allen Street, Boston.

Extract from the Report of the Agent, Rev. F. T. Gray.

"It has occurred to your agent, that it would be well for the Society to consider the expediency of having Life Members. The suggestion has struck many very favorably, as by this means the teachers and parents would have an opportunity of testifying their affection and regard to the Pastor and the Superintendent of the Sunday School by making them members of the Sunday School Society."

At a recent meeting of the Society, the following article was made a part of the Constitution:

Art. 12. The sum of Ten Dollars paid into the treasury, by or for any one person, shall constitute him a Life Member of the Society.

THE

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH AN ABSTRACT OF THE

ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

THIRTY-FIRST OF MAY, 1843.

BOSTON:
SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS.
1843.

part information and breathe a new impulse. These gentlemen go only where they are invited to go, and of invitations there is no lack. Schools, churches, and associations have manifested a wish to listen to the spoken word. Letters are constantly received from every section of the Commonwealth expressing a desire for such visits. Feeble schools at a distance often consider these labors of love of great advantage. Large and flourishing schools do not disdain the proffered aid, but greet it with a hearty welcome. Associations extend their hospitalities and feel that expressions of sympathy and the tribute of experience from those who have long reflected upon the best means of imparting religious instruction, are not without their value.

Amid many a rural celebration, with the blooming fields around and the shady boughs above, have words of encouragement been spoken, and in many a sanctuary, from the sacred altar, have we lifted up our voices to plead for the right spiritual culture of the young.

But not through the living voice alone has this Society sought to exert a beneficent influence. It has also been aided by the written page, through books which have been printed by the Society for gratuitous distribution among the young, and which, during the past year, have been gladly received.

Another means of usefulness has been sought through public meetings, in which the subject of moral and religious education has been brought before the public, and remarks offered by those whose thoughts were worthy of weight in the community. Thus has there been a free interchange of good feeling, and such expositions of spiritual culture as must have excited many to renewed exertions.

It has been considered desirable by the Board of this Society to inquire into the condition of schools abroad,

and to correspond with those brethren in other lands, who, though separated from us by distance, are united with us in love.

A letter has been received from Rev. Mr. Muzzey, from which the following extracts are taken:

"Scotland," he says, "is an admirable illustration of the value of good schools. Her people are peculiarly intelligent, moral and christian. Instead of meeting groups of idle children in the streets; noisy, profane, corrupt and corrupting, you here meet (as in New England) the home-bound troop issuing, at every corner of the street in the large cities, from the goodly school-house. On Sunday you see all classes of children repairing for instruction to the Sabbath school, neatly dressed and with quiet deportment. I was constantly reminded of home by the character both of parents and children, during my stay in Scotland, and I trace this resemblance in no slight degree to their excellent system of parochial schools. There is a respect for the Sabbath and all the institutions of religion among them, which we should do well to emulate."

"I feel warranted," he adds, "in assuring our friends in America, that the cause of religious education has never commanded so general an interest among the liberal Christians of this country, as at the present moment."

The Teachers of the Bristol School [England] write as follows:

"We wish that the advanced in age would give the Sunday schools more of their countenance, and cheer them on in every good work. The Apostle Paul advised his friend to be 'apt to teach,' and all who have paid any attention to Sunday school teaching must feel the necessity of this ability, before they can expect to engage the attention of the young. But there are other qualifications required of a Sunday

school teacher,—patience, untiring exertion, and care. As Dr. Channing says, the noblest minds should bring their influence to bear upon the young in this great work."

There is a point to which we do not pay enough attention,—the self-preparation of each teacher for his class before he comes to school. If all would give a short time to this duty, it would be of vast moment and add to their influence and efficiency. If this duty of the teachers was practised, we should not see so much of inattention at times on the part of the children, arising from the neglect of it.

Some remarks are made upon Teachers' Meetings, stating that great benefit is derived from them. "Here," says the letter, "we cannot omit to refer to our valued friend and pastor, Dr. Carpenter. He took great interest in these meetings; he would cheer us by his counsel, and was in the habit of reading to us interesting and instructive passages upon religious education. *Though dead he still lives to us all.*"

An interesting letter has also been received from the daughter of the late Dr. Carpenter.

She states, that, in the school under her charge, the teachers continue their friendly interest in the children after they leave the school.

The letter also states that among the older boys in the school who are engaged in weekly labor, a most important class has been formed which proves an excellent training for teachers.

This lady also states another pleasing incident of two little girls, who of their own accord, opened an evening school for children and older persons who have no other opportunity of gaining instruction. This school has been carried on with the greatest order and propriety for more than nine months.

Letters have been received from Belfast, Ireland, expressing a strong desire to hear from the schools on

this side of the water. This letter states that till within a few years the Sunday schools of all denominations in Ireland received Bibles, Testaments, &c., from a society which was liberally supported by the religious of every party, but the spirit of bigotry was aroused, and the committee of the society withdrew all aid from schools connected with *liberal churches*, and with a strange inconsistency refused to supply them ON ANY TERMS with those scriptures which they believed were able to make men wise unto salvation. It thus became necessary to form an independent society, and there is reason for thankfulness that the increasing interest which has been felt for some years in the North of Ireland in the cause of Sabbath schools, rendered this work comparatively easy. The efforts of bigotry which were directed against the instruction of the children of our communion, have, under the blessing of God, been instrumental in forming and maturing plans by which they may be instructed in those principles of *liberty*, *holiness* and *love* which are inculcated in the word of God. A short time ago comparatively few of our churches had Sabbath schools in connection with them. Now, I am happy to state that there is hardly one which has not a well-organized and efficient school."

After alluding in the kindest manner to the aid which they have derived from the books published on the subject of *Religious Education* in this country, by Ware, Muzzey, Channing and others, the writer says—"The most anxious subject of inquiry now (among teachers impressed with the importance of their office) is, how they shall convey the *spirit* of religion to the *heart* of the pupil?—and by dwelling frequently on this point, and making it the subject of correspondence with their brethren, in their own and in other societies, and chiefly by making it the subject of meditation and prayer, they may be greatly assisted

in this paramount object of all Sunday school instruction."

The letter closes as follows:

"Our Committee trust that the desire which is felt on the part of this Society for a regular correspondence with the Boston Association will be favorably received, and that the spirit of our teachers may be refreshed and their hands strengthened by an occasional communication from their brethren in New England.

"New England is dear to many in Ireland because of the origin of its religious institutions, because of its progress in spiritual freedom, and because of the great and good men, living and dead, whose labors and writings have adorned the gospel of Jesus."

Letters have been received from other places abroad, expressing a desire to open a correspondence, both for the information that may be gained and to cultivate a brotherly interest between those *having like faith and desires, on each side of the Atlantic.*

The Secretary has received communications from many at home who have much experience, and whose views are worthy of our reflection. From the abundant and rich material, they are happy in being able to present the following extracts.

The Rev. Mr. Livermore, of Keene, writes as follows *on the mode of conducting* TEACHERS' MEETINGS.

"We have at different periods pursued a variety of modes, but have this season adopted the following: All the classes have the same lessons, in various class-books. An explanation is first given by the pastor of the lesson for the next Sabbath, and hints are suggested as to methods of making them practical and effectual on life and character.

"*A paper is then read* by an editor, gentleman or lady, appointed at a previous meeting, consisting of matter mostly original, with an occasional selection,

and called '*The Teachers' Journal.*' This occupies about half an hour in reading, and is subject to criticism and remark as the reader proceeds.

"Teachers, members of the Bible class and older scholars in the school, attend these weekly meetings.

"Before this we have tried the plan of written communications, but with only partial success. A paper gives a degree of certainty and permanency to the exercise that is favorable to the interest.

"This experiment is based upon the method we adopted last winter in holding social meetings for intellectual and religious improvement in our society, at which a paper, more general in its character, was read, and which was thought interesting and profitable. A weekly paper gives opportunity for those to write who are indisposed to converse, and treasures up in a permanent form many valuable hints and essays on the duties of teachers, the methods of instruction and the general interests of spiritual culture.

"These are circulated afterwards in the paper which is passed from hand to hand, and which is read and pondered at leisure.

"Different societies and places call for diversities of operation, but may not the plan of a paper," continues the writer, "add interest and profit to Teachers' Meetings generally, both in city and country ?"

The following remarks upon a course of instruction for those of a somewhat advanced age, may suggest views of importance to others. They are communicated by the Principal of one of our Normal Schools, who is also Superintendent of the Sabbath School in the town where he resides.

The class is composed of pupils above seventeen years of age, and some of them between twenty and thirty.

The desire of the instructer was to teach the scholars so as to make the Scriptures their own interpreter.

"I prepared myself," says the writer, "on one Sunday, for the lesson of the next. I then used some ten or fifteen minutes in giving (by the previous assistance of a reference Bible and Concordance) those parallel passages, which, in my judgment, served to explain the lesson, and required of the scholars to consult these, and, from them, to decide the meaning of the parts of the lesson.

"When (as of course is frequent) any word or phrase seemed of sufficient importance, a whole lesson (or more) was given to it; a great number of texts (if it admitted) were referred to, and the pupils were required so to class them as to bring out the meaning, or meanings, of the text.

"Here follows an example:

"The lesson is the third chapter of Matthew. The parallel passages in the other gospels are stated for *consultation*. Then, verse by verse, are passages referred to, in the Old and New Testament, having similar phrases. These are to be consulted.

"Thus terms in one part of the Bible are compared with the same terms in other connections. These terms are classed by each pupil according to their understanding of its use, and then they are requested to state the result of their investigations, and to give what they, now, consider the meaning of the particular passage under consideration.

"After each scholar had given a statement, then the teacher gave the result of his investigation, and asked and answered questions.

"At times one phrase (as, for instance, the phrase 'kingdom of Heaven,' in this passage) would occupy a whole lesson.

"You will perceive," says the writer, "my object to be, to put my pupils in the way to interrogate the scriptures for themselves.

"The pupils were not led *blindfolded* over a course;

but (being directed as to the way) traversed it themselves."

The Superintendent of the Sabbath School at Cambridgeport (after giving an interesting account of the school with which he is connected) dwells upon the topic of *Christian love*. This, he says, should be the tissue running through the whole web of Sabbath school instruction. Love to one another, he considers the great, central, social principle of our holy religion. The child's mind and heart should be imbued thoroughly with this heavenly principle. "Love," says an apostle, "is the fulfilling of the law." Is it not to be feared that the reason why so many fall short of the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus is, that their souls have not been filled with that Divine love which was so peculiarly the spirit of their Master?

The soul of *the teacher* should be filled with this heavenly grace; then will *his pupils* take knowledge of him that he has *been with Jesus*. Some conscientious teachers may have been backward in dwelling upon this topic, fearing their own experiences. Let me say to such a brother, "*take courage*; he that would learn must teach." The duty of infusing this heavenly attribute into other hearts, would cause it to spring up spontaneously and abundantly in your own. On the bended knee you can seek it at the Divine fountain: It will be shed abroad in the heart and overflow to bless the children of God.

Much attention has been given to the nature of the child and the kind of effect which religious truth should have upon the young mind. The following communication is from one who has had much experience, having been long practically interested in the cause of education, and having for many years been the Superintendent of a Sunday school.

Recently the word *conversion* has been used in connection with our Sunday schools. In reference to

Bible classes and older scholars, I have no objection to it; but to others its use may lead to a course of instruction highly injurious.

The word *conversion* is not *applicable* to *a child*. The child, as such, is not a sinner, nor an alien from God. By nature it is not corrupt. "Of such," says the Saviour, in speaking of children—"of SUCH *is the kingdom of Heaven*." While in addressing sinners he exclaims, "Except YE be *converted* and become *as* little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." These words imply purity, innocence, freedom from corruption on the part of the child. There is nothing therefore in the nature or condition of childhood of which you can predicate a change in the sense of *conversion*.

A child is not in a state of alienation from God. A child is born neither *attached* to, nor alien from Him. For some years children are not accountable beings, because of their undeveloped faculties and their ignorance of duty. The object of the Sunday school, and of all religious instruction, then, is, not to *convert* the soul, but to *develope* it,—to enlighten the mind and call forth its purest and highest affections. In the Bible we read of children's being "*brought up* in the nurture of the Lord;" of their being "*trained* in the way they should go;" but not of their being *converted*.

If when they have advanced in years, and have been brought to know the difference between right and wrong, they are led to commit faults and become alienated from God, *then* they are proper subjects of repentance and conversion.

But, under genial influences, the soul will unfold itself as naturally and regularly as the unfolding of a bud. The great object of the parent and teacher should be to apply the *light* and *heat* so as naturally

to mature the germ of its being ; and (warding off every blight of sin) bring it to its highest perfection.

The following is an extract from Rev. Mr. Stetson's unpublished address before the Middlesex Sunday School Society, which we are permitted to use in reference to the same subject :

" Children come to us on a grave mission. They are beings put into our hands without any actual character, yet with inborn faculties and tendencies, which, as they are unfolded under our influence, may make them angels or demons. The germs of heaven and of hell are wrapped up in these young, innocent bosoms. As sure as they live to attain to the knowledge of good and evil, their native qualities will shoot up in rank luxuriance, and demand the most anxious care and training ; and how often do the baser instincts get the start and the advantage, and choke up, by their monstrous overgrowth, all that is fair and beautiful in the soul.

" The universal tendency to evil is a fact not to be overlooked in spiritual culture. I do not say that it is an irresistible tendency, but all experience affirms that it is never effectually resisted. We are children of a fallen race. Deeper than all actual misdoing lies a dark ground-work of sin in the universal heart,—a tendency to worldliness and alienation from God, which will baffle all our efforts to build up a religious character, until the spirit of God, kindling the soul, through some quickening word, causes the Divine life to unfold itself from within. Innocent and lovely as that child seems to-day, you will find to-morrow that he is but a sensual and selfish creature, with little strength against temptation, with still less reverence for God or his law.

" We must, then, keep distinctly in view the fact that a part of his nature is not yet born. That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is animal,—his

higher and nobler faculties lie undeveloped within him. Accordingly a true religious culture must aim at nothing less than to quicken and unfold these spiritual faculties that he may be born again, that is, into the divine life,—or not all his animal instincts and impulses can make him a child of heaven. This is the true meaning of that universal depravity of the race which has received such various interpretations. It is the alienation of the heart from God and the want of reverence for what is holy and divine. It is the office of the teacher, therefore, not merely to instruct, but to convert the soul of the child, by calling into activity those higher instincts and affections which bring it into filial relation to the Father.

"Religious culture, then, is a natural want of children. No more can the body have its natural and healthy growth without its daily bread, than the soul without the bread of eternal life. God made it for religion and virtue,—for communion with himself, in obedience to his law. Every true teacher is a minister of Divine wisdom and love. The resources of this world are inadequate to train a single child of Heaven to its magnificent destiny. Under the influence of heaven must he be reared, and to these influences his nature is preadapted. He is made capable of *receiving*, but not capable of *originating*, the wisdom by which his soul shall grow into strength and beauty."

Following out a somewhat similar train of thought, the Superintendent of a Sunday School in this vicinity speaks thus :

"We expect to see a yet more fervent faith in the adaptation of religious truth to the minds of the young. The great central truths of our religion,—the true ideas of the Spiritual and the Divine, we believe are adapted to very early stages of the intellect.

"With a deeper spiritual perception we might see

the moral nature slowly preparing for its coming conflicts,—the quickening of the moral sensibilities to more active life. Gradually is the soul built up in its better affections ;—numberless influences minister to its education. And what temptations shall be successfully resisted,—what depths of sin avoided, by a word of truth duly spoken,—what harvests of blameless principles and purified feelings, shall be the exceeding great reward of early religious culture, we can never know. But, to preserve the soul of childhood pure, to assist it to a knowledge of itself, and lead it up to God, are objects that should press upon all as an imperative work of duty and love."

The author of "Words in a Sunday School" writes as follows :

"I feel that nothing would more vivify and enlarge the powers and success of Sabbath School Teachers generally, than the study of the ground-work of humanity, in their own personal experience.

"Children possess a deep hidden life, a wheel within the wheel, and it is this that the teacher must study.

"Life is real to the child,—God has willed it so. *Let* it be real ;—why seek to anticipate experience ? If *we* say, 'life is a vain show,' and *he* says, 'it is real sport,' his opinion is as good as ours, and, it may be, contains as profound a truth. Pay reverence to that truth,—God has given it as a stepping-stone to another ; 'but *you* would *help him* to that other—you would unfold a deeper life.' This can only be unfolded *through* the truth he, at the time, holds. Respect *that* truth, and you also may have learned somewhat. 'Will *he* listen to *your* truth ?' He assents—you, then, engage his sympathy, kindle his fancy, move his heart, and already (at the end of the hour) he has made a stride in spiritual life, *because* he has *lived* an hour of internal activity.

"A child that has thought one genuine thought, or

felt one genuine emotion, is a deeper and older child than before.

"Some one says, 'teach a savage by a figure on the sand that the radii of a circle are equal, and he is no longer a savage, but a thinking being;' and so a child that has passed through the life of a thought or emotion, has made a step in spiritual being,—is no longer the same child as before.

"'But will this mental activity, if produced, bear the practical result of making children more true, honest, reverent?' Perhaps not *so immediately* as fear and punishment, but if it be the object to develope a higher moral life, no mode would seem to be more effective than the awakening of thought and feeling.

"A child that thinks and feels,—a man that thinks and feels, how different a being he is, under all circumstances, from one of torpid mental life;—keener-sighted to the approach of evil, more open to influxes of good.

"We cannot mould children's character after our fashion. They WILL be THEMSELVES; and a teacher has made good preparation for his work, when he has learned to love nature in variety, and variety of nature in children,—when he feels that he can win the child to virtue only by siding with its best tendencies, and passing from his own soul to the pupil's on that deeper line of humanity that unites both.

"For text-book, let teachers look into their own hearts. Let them feel, '*I too* am a child;'—let them go back in reverent memory to their desk at school, their nook in the orchard, and fathom the secret of the tears and blushes,—the heart-beatings and heart-hopings,—the fear in darkness, the vows on the nightly pillow, which fill up the experience of childhood, common-place as it may seem."

We are happy in being able to lay before you the

following views and suggestions, by George B. Emerson :

"I have always considered the Sunday School as among the most blessed ministers of the gospel. It fulfils, better than any other, one of the commands of Christ,—'Suffer little children to come unto me.' It seeks to remove (that most prolific parent of sin) ignorance of moral and religious duties. The child and the teacher come together, in the Sunday school, to obtain light from the inspired word of God, and from meditations together upon truths revealed. To this effort for truth, when earnest, a blessing is always granted. 'Seek and ye shall find,' is the plain command and promise of the Saviour, and no one ever asked, in humility and sincerity, for religious truth, and asked in vain. Both teacher and taught will thus attain to a greater measure of the religious spirit than they would in almost any other way. Solitary study, with no reference to the good to be communicated, cannot enable one to reach the highest Christian truth. 'If any man will *do* his will, he shall know of the doctrine.'

"And we have reason to think that HE only WILL know. Christian sympathy is at once the *great evidence* of the Christian spirit, and the *great means of advancing* to higher attainments in the Christian life. The Sunday school teacher has the opportunity of advancing to the highest, as his office is to *do* as well as *teach* the duties and truths of religion.

"Every attentive observer of the peculiar circumstances of New England must have been struck with the great disproportion between the apparatus for religious teaching and the effects produced. How many men of the highest talents, learning, zeal, elevation of character, engaged in the work !—what a vast number of able discourses,—what labor, devotion, self-sacrifice ! And how little of the peculiar fruits of the

gospel,—Christian humility, charitableness, purity, unwavering faith, cheerful hope!

"Why should this be so? How happens it that so much labor is spent in vain?

"Zealous men, of every several persuasion, are prone to believe that it would not be so, if all were of their creed. Fatal error in *belief* is, they think, at the bottom of it. Yet this cannot be; for many, of the most widely different sects, of equal ability, equal sincerity, and equal zeal, hold, at once, the same opinion. Each thinks it essential that all should be like him.

"I am not about to attempt a solution of so great a difficulty. Two circumstances, however, it seems to me, must have great influence. In instructions from the pulpit, the act of the understanding is too often substituted for the religion of the heart. The preacher is too often occupied with advocating his peculiar views of christianity rather than those great truths upon which all Christians agree. He is more anxious to bring into his own flock than into the great sheepfold of Christ. It is not the simple gospel, as we hear it from the lips of the Saviour, which is preached; but the conclusions, the opinions, the commandments of men.

"The other circumstance is,—that the pulpit in a great degree neglects children, and addresses itself to grown men. The mode of religious instruction adopted in the New England churches supposes, what has long since ceased to be true, that every family is a religious family, and that the religious education of the child will be taken care of by the parents. That forming period, when the heart is open to receive impressions, and may be trained to the love of God and man, is therefore passed over, and discourses are written to confirm *men* in the opinions which they have already formed.

"To this defect of the pulpit the Sunday school furnishes, if rightly used, an effectual remedy.

"The great object of the Sunday school teacher should be to impart moral and religious instruction. He should aim to quicken and enlighten the conscience, by the life and light of the Gospel; to elevate the moral and religious nature of the child, and to train to habits of true feeling and right action. To this end, he should first give his whole attention to the Gospel, as contained in the Evangelists,—to the very words of CHRIST. And only when fully possessed of the spirit and truths of the GOSPEL, should he proceed to the other parts of the Bible. Christ is our master. He only can lead us into all spiritual truth. His teachings are the most intelligible that have ever been given, for he addresses himself, with authority, to the soul. Let it not be said that this would be undervaluing the other parts of the sacred volume. We wish to be not of Paul, or of Cephas, but of Christ. When we have listened to the words of *Christ* and imbibed HIS Spirit, we can the better understand Paul, and James, and Peter. And we do no injustice to OTHER teachers by placing *Christ* far above them all.

When we understand the *New Testament*, we may go to the Old. But if we studied the Old previously, and without the help of the light derived from the New, we could at best be but Jews in our attainments; and how very far short of the standard of the Gospel the most enlightened of the Jews fell, all the discourses of the Saviour, and all their own histories, show us.

"One word as to the manner in which some of the characters of the Jewish history should be presented to children. The conscience (enlightened by the divine radiance of the image of the Father in Jesus Christ,) is not to be clouded by attempts to apologise for the great sins of which many of the favorites of the

Jews are described as guilty. They should, on the contrary, be shown in their true colors, as they are delineated in the clear, strong truth of the wonderful histories which make them known to us. And the great mercy and loving kindness of God should be pointed out as rendered conspicuous by his care of even such men as they. So truly is he the Father of all, that he watches over and protects even as great sinners as Jacob;—so infinite in his readiness to pardon, that he pardons, upon repentance, even the enormous crimes of David.

"May I be allowed a few remarks upon the *spirit* and *manner* in which the Sunday school teacher should teach. It is, or should be, an axiom in the theory of teaching that no one can communicate what he does not himself possess. It is the great office of the Sunday school teacher to communicate the highest principles of religious and moral truth. He must teach reverence for God, love to man, admiration for what is right, and detestation for what is wrong. He *can* teach them only by having them in his own breast. He must therefore first endeavor to fill his own soul with reverence for the Infinite Father, with that charity which thinketh no evil, with all noble sentiments of justice, truth and purity. His first work is with his own heart. In that must he first overcome the evil, and lift up the good. So, and so only, will he be prepared to overcome evil with good in his intercourse with others. Then will *his* be *indeed* a blessed ministry of good to himself and to the children of his charge."

The following remarks have been received from the Rev. E. Q. Sewall.

"It may easily happen that we substitute outward progress for *inward* growth, and (relying upon our wise methods and well-adapted system of means,) forget that there must be a life put into these by the teacher's living soul.

"The simpler our arrangements the better. The least art and the most nature and freshness would be my wish in the forms of instruction. Just enough system to preserve order, which is as agreeable as it is requisite for all healthy minds.

"The teacher is not set at the well of salvation to pour its waters waiting to receive them. He is not appointed to tell what religion is, and rehearse its truths in choice words; but it is his duty to produce religious emotions,—convictions,—purposes, in the souls of those whom he is instructing, to engraft the truth so as to make it fruitful—not to impart it so that it shall be kept in the *memory* only. He can hope to win access for the virtues he enjoins (into the hearts of his pupils) only so far as he can render them lovely and desirable by the charms which his own heart's love for them will supply. He must know indeed, how to discipline and inform the mind; but esteem it his most important aim to quicken the conscience,—to draw the affections heavenward, to impart the image of Jesus upon the soul. But for such aims he will have no heart, except he be, himself, a conscientious, heavenly-minded follower of the Lamb of God. The power to awaken into living activity the religious principle in *others*, can be obtained only by one's *own* spiritual life and energy. The fervor of holy feeling which is cherished in the teacher's breast, will not fail to warm the youthful spirits gathered around him. But if he be not himself alive unto God, he can by no address conceal the melancholy fact, or avert the chilling effects of it from their susceptible minds."

We will venture to add in connection with the foregoing, a few words, which, though they have already been printed, we need offer no apology for repeating, are from the Rev. George Putnam.

"The heart of a child is a great study for his teacher, and he is but poorly fitted for his office till he un-

derstands that heart and knows how to make his way to it. It is not enough that the children receive all his instructions and do all his biddings; we want to know what motives he appeals to, what feelings he excites, what spirit he diffuses. The young buds of spring want sunshine, and so do young minds,—the sunshine of kindly and gracious words and looks; they must have it, or they will be dwarfed and chilled.

"A thorough disciplinarian,—a successful exacter of good lessons, is a valuable man, as the world goes; but when you find a man who, besides being this, has a sunny and genial spirit, an agreeable temper, a sympathetic heart, knows how to come at, and draw out and keep out, the best, most generous and pure and high-toned sentiments in the breast of a child, and to promote the growth of the *heart* and *soul*, as well as of the intellect,—he is a *rare* and a *great* man; you cannot prize him too much."

Thus have we laid before you extracts from the valuable communications with which we have been richly supplied. Many of the ablest minds are interested in this cause. They are probing the whole subject of education to its centre. They are devising wise methods and seeking to awaken individual minds to a conviction of their responsibilities.

We have given no statistics respecting our schools, and referred distinctly to none in particular. There are two, however, which may, properly, form an exception:

We would refer, briefly, to the Sunday School at the prison in East Cambridge. A teacher says,—"We have continued encouragement for zealous labor in this field of duty. We know of many whose reformed lives date from the moral and religious instruction there dispensed. Letters are often received from employers of such as have added *practice* to

good resolves; and have manifested the fruit of instruction by a useful life in society.

"Thus by the effort of some of our Christian friends, many unfortunate persons have been helped forward into right paths.

"May the blessing of heaven multiply examples of thorough renovation from lives of sin, and sanctify many in lives of holiness."

We have great satisfaction in being able to refer to a Sunday School in our vicinity which has for several years been an important source of Christian influence. We allude to the school convened at the Navy Yard in Charlestown, which embraces for pupils the navy apprentices of the Receiving ship Ohio, numbering, at different times, from one hundred to two hundred and fifty scholars.

It is to the Sailing Master, Mr. Moores, this school owes its origin and success. The teachers are all *ladies*, and from various religious denominations. In this school, for a considerable period, *our* views have had a representation.

The Superintendent wisely judged in his choice of teachers. Isolated as are these young boys from the usual influences of social and domestic life, it was a happy thought, to give them, through these religious teachers, the more softening and gentle influences of *woman*. In the church this evening we see a portion of this valuable school, and welcome them with Christian sympathy to this assembly. May God bless the sailor boy and the sailor boy's friends,—for

> The sailor's *home* is on the wave,
> And there his *grave* may be:
> Oh! Christian, stretch your hand to save
> The pilgrim of the sea.

At the commencement of the season the Associate Agents were reappointed to visit Sunday Schools in

behalf of the Society. They have visited, during the year, five states and forty-five towns.

Number of teachers in schools addressed,	1,240
" " pupils,	7,593
" " persons addressed,	24,200
" " miles travelled,	2,590
" " addresses,	84

The occasions upon which these visits have been made, have been various. Twenty-five were Celebrations and Rural Excursions, fifty-five have been in the Schools, at the usual school hour. They have also met four Associations: The Cheshire Pastoral Association, the Worcester County Association, the West Ministerial Association, and the Middlesex Sunday School Society.

They have published three new Tracts for distribution. One entitled "Samuel Johnson," of 16 pages, edition of 3,500; "Moral Courage," 12 pages, 3,000; "Truth," and "Selfishness Overcome," 12 pages, 3,000. Making a total published of 9,500.

They have distributed during the year 7,538, or 123,500 pages. Making an increase over the last year of 66,500 pages.

Contributions to the funds of the Agency have been made by the following schools: Petersham, $5,00; Northfield, 2,60; Peterboro', 7,00; Billerica, 5,00. Total, $19,60.

Twenty Life Members have been made, namely: Rev. Messrs. Newell, of Cambridge; Bigelow, Taunton; Stebbins, Leominster; Hall, Dorchester; Thomson, Barre; Cushing, Saco; Gannett, Boston; Barrett, Boston; Doggett, Bridgewater; Lambert, East Cambridge;—and Messrs. Ware, Cambridge; Carter, Leominster; Stratton, Brighton; Clapp, Dorchester; Salisbury, Medford; Brown, Framingham; Hartwell, Littleton; Hews, Weston; White, Petersham; and Stone, East Cambridge.

Making the receipts from this source $200; and from both, 219,60. The amount of expenses being $104,85.

We have had ample reason to believe that the Agency is received with favor; that it is regarded as a mission of light and love, and as a means of increasing and elevating the religious sentiment of the community, without interfering, in any degree, with other institutions and established means of grace.

Before closing this Report the Society would say to the community and to the country—

Consider the social, political, and moral aspects of this great nation at the present moment. Look into the halls of legislation, and abroad through the varied walks of life. Reflect upon the crowd of criminals at the tribunals of justice, and the multitude who being criminal, have escaped detection. Call to mind the long list of public defaulters, breaches of trust, fraudulent bankruptcies, and legislative repudiation. Licentiousness debasing the land. Intemperance with its horrible woes. The evils of pauperism, and the curse of slavery. Plans of philanthropy baffled, laws defied, religion desecrated. Manhood without innocence, and old age without honor; and remember that the iniquities of the man are the legitimate fruits of corrupted youth,—that the direst destruction that hovers over a nation is the just retribution that follows the moral neglect of the young. Can this community thus look upon the swelling tide of her population and not feel that NOW there is need of action?

This Society would say to the minister of God, Guard with sacred fidelity the lambs of your flock. Watch over, with prayerful solicitude, the tender minds of the young. Aid by frequent counsels those who are ready to teach. May the clergy ever continue to impart all possible light to those who are wil-

ling to labor as teachers, that the divine beauty of our religion may irradiate every heart; that the holy doctrines we cherish, breathing practical piety and glowing with heavenly life, may be felt not only in the mature ripeness of age, but in the delightful season of youth.

The children of the affluent as well as the children of the poor, need spiritual culture. In wealthy congregations the Sunday school is therefore as important as elsewhere. Still, we should never forget that there are those in society who have few comforts and but little knowledge. We may hear the sigh of sorrow and see the knit brow and glaring eye of the abandoned. We may behold the haunts of sin, the damp cellar, and the smoky garret, where the children of poverty find a shelter. These are our brothers; we will aid them. Those little children, trembling on the very verge of ruin, they may be saved. That forlorn wretch mounting the scaffold, he also might have been redeemed.

We, (say the members of this Society, and the Teachers engaged in this holy cause) we will teach the young the truths of the Gospel. We will go forth as spiritual guides. The children of the affluent shall be rich in virtue :—the poorest shall have treasures in heaven. We will labor for the blessing of all, that God may open to them here the fountains of life, and hereafter the gates of Paradise.

With these remarks, and with feelings of gratitude for the past, and hopes for continued usefulness in the future, this Report is respectfully submitted.

R. C. WATERSTON,

Corresponding Secretary.

ANNIVERSARY

OF

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

[We are indebted to the Christian Register for the following accurate account of the interesting proceedings and very able report of the speeches at the Anniversary Meeting, by a Teacher.]

The anniversary of this Association was celebrated on Wednesday evening, May 31st, in Rev. Mr. Gannett's church. It was the most interesting meeting (unless, perhaps, we except that of last year) which the Society has ever holden, and as a teacher it was to us the most interesting anniversary of the week. At half past six o'clock the pastors and teachers of Sunday schools met in the vestry, and proceeded in a body to the church, where seats had been reserved for their use. At an early hour, the house, with all its pews and aisles, and even the pulpit stairs, was crowded by an audience composed of old and young, parents and children, pastors, teachers and pupils. The singing seats and the front pews in the gallery were occupied by 150 children, the representatives of several Sunday schools; among whom we noticed with pleasure several of the seamen from the Sabbath school established on board the U. S. ship Ohio.

The services commenced with a voluntary on the organ, which was followed by a chant sung by the sweet voices of the happy children. Prayer was offered by that venerable patriarch, Rev. Dr. Pierce, of Brookline, who stood in the pulpit during the whole evening, and manifested, by his earnest attention, the deep interest he feels for the rising generation. His simple and heart-felt address to the throne of grace was succeeded by the singing of the following hymn, to the tune of *Atterbury*.

The season's happy voices,
From forest, field, and flood,
Now when the earth rejoices,
With spring's awakening good,—
From lowland, hill and river,
Go up in songs of praise,
And ours to life's great Giver,
In unison we raise.

We thank him for these meetings,
From noise and care away,
For all these kindly greetings,
Which meet us here this day;
The scene now spread before us,
Those friends whom we should love,
His goodness round and o'er us,
His teachings from above.

Delight we here to gather,
From all our quiet homes,
To learn thy will, our Father,
From whom all wisdom comes;
To drink the blessed spirit
Of Jesus, thy dear Son,
That so we may inherit
The kingdom he has won.

The annual Report was then read by the Rev. R. C. Waterston, Corresponding Secretary.

As it will be published, we shall give only a brief account of its principal topics. The Society was

first organized in 1827. Like the Board of Education, it has no power to enforce, but only to advise. Its object is to gather information, develope new improvements, to suggest new plans. It acts not so much as an organization, as by its active agents. These agents, who are unpaid, visit any Sabbath school to which they may be invited. They have visited many schools, and in most instances have received a hearty welcome. These gentlemen have been aided also by the written page, having distributed gratuitously many thousand tracts printed by the Society. The Secretary, after alluding to his extensive home and foreign correspondence, read interesting extracts from letters received from England, Scotland and Ireland. Extracts from letters received from Rev. Mr. Livermore, of Keene, on the proper mode of conducting teachers' meetings,—from Lewis G. Pray and Rev. Mr. Stetson, on the subject of conversion,—from Rev. Mr. Putnam, on the nature of the child,—and from several other distinguished men, were read and heard with interest. Reference was then made to the Sabbath schools established at the East Cambridge prison, and on board the U. S. ship Ohio, and an appropriate and feeling allusion was made to the delegates from the latter, assembled in the gallery. During the past year the associate agents of the Society have visited five States and forty-five towns.

Number of miles travelled,	2590
The number of teachers in schools addressed,	1240
" pupils,	7593
" persons addressed,	24,200

During the past year three new pamphlets have been published, viz., "Samuel Johnson," an edition of 3500, "Selfishness Overcome," an edition of 3000, and "Moral Courage," an edition of 3000 copies, making in all, 9500 copies, 7538 of which

have been distributed, or 123,500 pages, making an increase of 66,500 pages over the last year.

Twenty Life Members have been added, and the whole receipts of the Society from this and other sources during the past year, amount to $219 00. The expenditures amount to $104 85. The Report closed with some excellent reflections upon the growing population of our country, the iniquity practised in many parts of it, the consequent need of increased effort on the part of Sabbath school teachers, and an exhortation to continued exertion in their high and holy work.

The children again sung in sweet unison, the following original hymn to the tune of *Go Forget Me*.

Welcome, welcome is the greeting
Which this day we give our friends;
Happy, happy be the meeting,
Providence so kindly lends.
Love of souls the richest treasure,
Casting out each earth-born fear,
Let the smile of social pleasure,
Gleam o'er all the objects here.

Like the sun, your feelings glowing,
Clothe these hours, so blest, in light;
So like him, when thou art going,
Leave behind a radiance bright:
Rays of brilliant thoughts to quicken,
Beams to warm the soul with love,
That when clouds of sorrow thicken,
They may lure to worlds above.

The Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, the President of the Society, after remarking upon the completeness of the Report, which almost precluded the necessity of saying another word, and upon his own indisposition and inability to speak from a severe cold, said that "we could hardly look around us upon such an assembly of children, teachers, pastors and parents,

without feeling overcome by that emotion of gratitude to God, which, when it fills the heart, checks the tongue; an emotion never excited to a greater extent than at the present moment here. We may meet with friends elsewhere, we may go to other scenes, which we leave with hopes disappointed, and desires unsatisfied, but here we meet with hearts in unison, with hands fresh from action, with souls engaged in our work. And when we listen to the Report which has been read, and learn of the devotion of so many minds, of so much wisdom, of so much experience, of so much considerate and judicious labor exerted in our holy cause, when we listen to the strains of the children, when we look upon each other and feel that we have come from our several scenes of labor, far and near, to survey and congratulate each other, when we suffer ourselves to yield to the combined influence of all these emotions, I feel assured that there will be no failure on the part of my friends to perform all the remaining duties of the evening, and perform them in that spirit of the Sabbath school, that spirit of Christ, which is all piety and peace."

Mr. Hill, of Harvard University, was then introduced to the meeting, and spoke to the following effect: "Fellow teachers, the work of the Sunday School is to raise the world from the state in which it now is, and to coöperate with the Christian ministry in redeeming mankind. What is it which we must teach our children in order to effect this work? Not knowledge. Intellectual food will not satisfy the soul. Knowledge will not save the soul from starvation. It will not do then to trust to our libraries alone, to the interpretation of the Scriptures alone, to the teaching of any knowledge, whether religious or secular, *alone*. We must not trust to moral feeling alone; morality will not save the world. We must not tell our pupils merely to love each other. This will not satisfy the

whole soul, but only a part. What then must we do? We must teach our children *religion itself*, and not religious *knowledge* merely. We must bring our children into communion with God. And what is religion? From the Report of the Secretary there seem to be two different views, one making it to consist in conversion, and the other in developing the native faculties of the human soul. Upon this subject I will give some of my experience as a Sunday school scholar. A sad experience it was, and God grant that it may never be yours. I thank God that I left the home of my childhood, for although home is dear to us all, yet the home of the soul is dearer, and that home have I found in New England. In New Jersey, where the influence of Liberal Christianity is never felt, there are few societies which do not hold Trinitarian doctrines. When a child I was placed in a Baptist Sabbath school. As my parents were Unitarians, having listened to the preaching of Priestley himself, Unitarian sentiments were early implanted in my mind. My teacher scarcely ever spoke to me on any other subject than my peculiar doctrines. His whole effort was to make me a Trinitarian. Having become weary of controversy, I deceived my teacher, and made him believe that I had adopted his views. I have long since repented of my hypocrisy and deceit, and I only mention the circumstance here, to show you the course which my teacher subsequently pursued. All his teachings afterward, and until I was twenty years old, aimed at my conversion. All that I could gather concerning the idea of conversion was, that it was something out of myself, something miraculous, which I might pray for, but do nothing to bring about. I hardly knew that there was a Unitarian church in the country, so confined was I amidst the influences of another denomination. The idea generally maintained of conversion, in that section of the

country, is that it is something exterior to ourselves, momentary, which, when given, will be followed by peace and happiness forever. Is this religion? I believe we must teach our children something very different. We must teach them love to God, and that this love is not shown by the mere *signs* of religion, but *is* religion itself. True, I have heard of good works. I have been instructed in love to God, but these were made secondary things, the proof of having been converted, and not the new state itself. We must teach our children to *be* religious, and not make them believe that they are to be *made* religious by some extraordinary and miraculous influence, with which they have nothing to do. We must teach them to change their own hearts, to make their own souls. Our Saviour never exhorted; he *taught*. We must not *explain*, we must *teach* religion. If we would teach them to love Christ, we must describe his character, his example, his perfection, and their young affections will rise towards him, and grow with their growth into true Christian love. We must teach them that God not only *made*, but *makes* the world, that he upholds and guides all things in it. Let us teach them to feel God's continual presence in their souls. Above all, fellow teachers, let us teach them love to God, love to Jesus, and to their fellow men, by *ourselves showing the spirit of love*. If we possess this spirit, if we are full of love to God, to Jesus and to the children placed under our instruction, then only may we undertake to fill their hearts with Christian love, then only will our efforts be crowned with success."

After this interesting address, which was listened to with profound attention, because it was uttered with feeling, the children united in singing the following hymn to the tune of *Sunrise*, the last four lines in each verse being sung as a duett with fine effect.

Sweet is the place of play,
And sweet our daily toys,
But sweeter far the day
Of Sacred joys.
Then thither go we year by year,
And in the Sunday school appear,
And love our class, the church, the Lord,
And God's holy word:
Sweet is the place of play, &c.

There in that happy place,
May we our teachers meet,
To hear their words of grace,
At Jesus' feet.
Oh, who from thence would stay away
Upon the blessed Sabbath day,
From themes so high, from thoughts so pure,
Ever to endure?
There in that happy place, &c.

Hon. Josiah Quincy Jr., spoke to the following effect: "One passage in the Secretary's Report gave me much pleasure and satisfaction. I refer to the Sabbath school established at our Navy Yard. We are here as men, we are here as Christians, but we are here also as Americans. And we cannot behold the seamen of our navy without feeling a deep interest in their welfare, for by them the glory of our Republic is to be sustained. How is it that our free institutions are to be preserved? All history gives but one answer, that Republics will not endure, whose people are not *virtuous*. Virtue, and virtue alone is the only true foundation on which our freedom must rest. The French did not obtain liberty, because they were not *good* enough to be free. How is our Republic to escape such a fate? I answer, by the moral and religious instruction of the young. Much stress is laid upon the influence of our public schools, and indeed, they have done much to advance our prosperity. But still common schools appeal to the lower motives of our nature. They do not develope

the highest and noblest faculties of our being. Their motto is, 'knowledge is power.' The motto of the Sunday school is, 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.' We must preserve our liberties and our prosperity by the spiritual, moral and religious instruction of our children. Your Secretary has adverted to the vast amount of sin and iniquity which yet prevail in our land. And it will be asked by some, if we expect to stop the progress of these rivers of sin by moral education. 'You might as well try to stop the cataract of Niagara with a bulrush,' say they. But they know little of the power of virtue and goodness to resist sin and evil. I believe the only sure and firm foundation of our political liberty to be the moral and religious instruction of the young. If we would be able to preserve the liberties which our fathers achieved, we must labor at this foundation. And in this way, our Sunday school teachers, by imparting knowledge to the moral and religious natures of our children, do more to sustain the fabric of our Independence, than any others can do. In our Republic, the active Christian is the truest patriot. And the teachers have this comfort, this one consolation to guide them through all trials, that, while they are fitting our children to live under *any* form of government, they are preparing them, and *themselves* also, for the dominion of that potentate, whose government is perfect freedom."

Rev. Mr. Moore, of Quincy, Illinois, rose, he said, to utter a single thought concerning the moral and religious education of the young. As a missionary, he would say, "that the true Missionary Society is the Sunday school. The American Unitarian Association sends forth one or two missionaries to the vast valley of the Mississippi. But the Sunday school sends out annually hundreds and thousands. I will

venture to say that not a Sunday school is here represented, which has not sent out, and is not continually sending out missionaries to the far-off valley. If we consider the influence exerted by the young men who go forth from our parishes and our Sunday schools to the West, we shall then see the importance of the institution. Take an example. A young man in that section of the country is surrounded with great dangers and temptations, and what will become of him who is destitute of the principles inculcated in the Sunday school? What influence will he exert in the sphere in which he moves, unless he have the religious spirit? I need not say that he will exert a blighting influence. But let us, on the contrary, observe that young man who was educated in the Sunday school. Full of the faith and hopes of the Gospel, what a blessed, what a purifying influence will he spread all around him! If any teachers feel that they wish encouragement, I would tell them that if the pupils under their charge do not go to that region, they will go somewhere, and wherever they are they will still be Christ's true missionaries. On them depend the hopes of our country, and as long as any teacher utters the daily prayer, 'thy kingdom come,' let him not relax his efforts in the glorious cause."

Rev. Mr. Harrington, of Providence, then addressed the meeting as follows: 'There was one sentence in the Report which struck me with peculiar force, and I shall come to that very soon. As we look upon the faces which crowd around us, what thoughts come into our minds of the future, when we shall be in our graves! Whence shall come our future legislators? From among our children! Whence shall be obtained the future tenants of our poor houses, whence shall come the prisoners in the cells of our State's prisons? Alas! from among our children! Under these solemn thoughts of what remains to be done for the young, I

often think whether it would not be better to call in our attention from all other philanthropic movements of the day, and concentrate every effort upon our children; whether it would not give a higher, purer tone to society, and realize the consummation of our most glorious hopes. How can we act on the child? And now I come to that sentence in the Report to which I at first alluded; 'we cannot communicate to others what we do not feel ourselves.' We cannot save the souls of *others*, unless *our own* souls are in a condition to be saved. We cannot save a soul, until we feel the value of the soul, until we understand its immortal destiny, and connection with God and man. Fellow teachers, let us always pray that we may possess true faith, true love, and true conversion, and the blessing of God will rest on our efforts. We shall then produce an effect on our children, and shall have the solemn satisfaction of being instrumental, in some measure, in this great work."

These remarks, to which we are unable to do justice, came from the heart of the speaker, and we trust, produced a deep impression on the hearts of the teachers. The following original hymn was then sung to the tune of *In the Cottage*, by two distinct choirs.

FIRST CHOIR.

Brothers, sisters, have you heard
The invitation of our Lord,
Calling children to his arms,
Blessing them with angel charms?
Jesus said, in words benign,
Come, and let the Lambs be mine;
I will feed them from above,
With the food of heavenly love.

SECOND CHOIR.

Yes, we 've heard the heavenly voice,
Making our glad hearts rejoice:
O, how gracious and how kind
Jesus is, a child to mind.

We will come at his request,
And partake the rich repast ;
Thus be blest with joy and love
From the holy fount above.

TOGETHER.

Then, united, let us raise
Songs of gratitude and praise ;
And triumphantly arise
To our home above the skies ;
O, how happy children are,
Who the bliss of saints can share.
Upward, upward let us soar,
Heaven our home forevermore.

Rev. Mr. Briggs, of Plymouth, addressed a word of encouragement to the teachers. "The teacher," he said, "feels always something of hope, and something of despondency, as he looks upon the class around him. He feels some hope that he may kindle the spirit of Christian love in the youthful minds before him, and he feels despondency, as he works with earnest purpose, and does not see the results which he desires to accomplish. The very idea of the Sunday school, and of the office of the teacher, is noble enough to kindle the enthusiasm of every heart, and despair should never overcome him. We read that Jesus went down to the baptism, and was buried in the waters of the Jordan. His soul was buried in devotion to the sublime work he was about to commence. The baptism first came, and then, the *temptation*. But in the true spirit of baptism, Christ met and overcame the temptation. Just so it is with the feelings and hopes of the Sunday school teacher. Let him lead his children down to the baptism, and then give them strength to go on and resist the temptation. Let him stand true and firm all the time, true to the spirit and example of Christ. His object is noble enough, if he does any thing for the fulfilment, though there comes often the feeling, that he does not accomplish all that

he desires, and does not behold the results which he wishes to see. I too was struck forcibly by that sentence to which allusion has been already made. 'The teacher cannot communicate what he does not feel.' That sentence embodies a grand central truth. Let him possess the true spirit of Christ, and he will accomplish all that he seeks. Let this spirit grow up, fellow teachers, in your own hearts, and then you may speak with power and effect. All the virtue of your efforts consists in faith which believes, and because it believes, speaks, and speaks with power. Reflect upon the nobleness of your work; let the spirit of religion be kindled within your own hearts, and then you will have a feeling which will support you in all trial and discouragement. This feeling will nerve you to go on, though you never see the results you are seeking. This spirit works with a feeling that 'a thousand years are as one day,' working as if the whole were to be accomplished tomorrow, and willing to die in the cause, though it never sees the fulfilment of its aim. With this spirit, which rises above all distrust and doubts, go on and persevere. Remember that the word of God is never spoken in vain, but bye and bye will bring forth fruit abundantly."

Rev. Samuel D. Robbins, of Chelsea, addressed the children in a few touching and impressive remarks, which, we trust, will never be forgotten by them. "I would speak to you," said he, "as a parent to his child, and would raise in your hearts new hope, new faith and love. One great feature of Unitarian Christianity, is its belief that Christianity was introduced to the world by a child. On a still and starry night, there went up from the hill-sides of Jerusalem, the cry, 'a child is born.' The voice of Jesus brought life and immortality to light. I would have you remember, that God has given you power to manifest the same love which Christ manifested for the

world. I wish you then, in this age of doubting and dispute, of forms and ceremonies, to have profound religion, to possess the spirit of God, and look to the imitation of Jesus for hope and salvation. I would have you go with him to Bethlehem and Cana, and behold him 'subject to his parents.' As my brother has said, I would have you go with him to the baptism and the temptation. I would have you follow him to the scene of transfiguration, and likewise to the mountain of prayer, and the garden of Gethsemane. Behold him at Calvary, upon the cross, and remember that crosses must come to you, and you will need the same faith to support you. If you would become true Christians, you must manifest the spirit of Christ in your life and conduct. You must live as he lived. Seek to raise your thoughts to heaven, remember that though your bodies go down to the narrow grave, and the new sepulchre hewn out of the rock covers you, God has placed within you a power which will burst the bands of death, and you can imitate your Saviour by your resurrection and ascension. I pray you to cling to the eternal words of life, to draw daily from the deep fountains of God's Holy Word, and remember and be assured that his comforting spirit will give you life."

After Mr. R. had concluded, Hon. Stephen C. Phillips announced, in a brief and solemn manner, the information which had been this evening received, of the death of Wm. P. Rice, of Cincinnati, one of the Vice Presidents of the Society. "We have listened," said he, "to the voices of the living; let us now listen to the voice of the departed dead. To mention the name of one in this assembly whom so many remember with love, is enough for all the purposes of eulogy. But as an officer in this Society, and for the instruction of those who knew him not, I must say a few words. Twenty years have elapsed since the

benevolent enterprise was projected by the young men of our denomination, of opening a Sunday school, in the northern extremity of this city, for the indiscriminate admission of poor and neglected children. This project was formed by young men in active business, and was attended with complete success, and there was laid the foundation of our Unitarian Sunday schools, as they are now organized. Willian P. Rice was the first Superintendent of this unpretending Sunday school, and his valuable services will never be forgotten by those who were his associates in the philanthropic work. Ten or twelve years ago, he left this city to live in Cincinnati. He never returned, but he carried with him there the heart and soul of the Sunday school teacher. The usefulness which he commenced here, he continued there with increasing lustre and effect. And he is gone! He is gone from his labors on earth to his reward in Heaven. Let us avail ourselves of his usefulness, and let us learn a lesson from this event. Let me submit to you, my friends, whether any address to the intellect or the heart, in moral sublimity, or in the nature and extent of its influence, can be compared with one moment's reflection upon the destiny of the Sunday school teacher in another world."

After these impressive remarks, which affected those who heard them, more than they can those who read our imperfect abstract, the children united their sweet voices for the last time in singing the appropriate closing hymn.

Good night! good night, to speech and song,
Good night! for time is fleeting,—
May Memory's voice remind us long
Of this our happy meeting,
And may you wake, with bosoms light,
Unclouded by a sorrow,
From dreams of all you love, to-night,
To pleasant hours to-morrow,

And for a theme,
May every dream
From Hope her rainbow borrow,
Good night ! to all a kind good night !

Good night ! good night ! we humbly pray,
To heaven our hearts addressing,
Our every thought and act to-day,
May meet His holy blessing.
Pure as the dew unseen ascends,
In morning's sunny hour,
Pure as the spotless lily bends
To heaven her vestal flower,
So purely there,
Oh, let our prayer
Rise to the same good Power.
Good night ! to all a kind good night.

Such is only a brief and imperfect abstract of the addresses made on this interesting occasion. We have endeavored, however, to give the *spirit*, where we could not remember the *letter* of the remarks. And if any teacher, distant in the country, shall take the same pleasure in reading, as we did in hearing them, and shall imbibe any of the spirit in which they were uttered, we shall be fully repaid for our labor.

But we cannot conclude, without remarking upon the beneficial tendency and results of this anniversary of the Sunday School Society. It must have exerted a beneficial influence upon pastors, teachers, parents, children, and all friends of the Sunday school. The pastors must take pleasure in beholding the lambs of their flock under the care of devoted teachers. The teachers must enjoy holy satisfaction in learning of the efforts and sympathy of their brethren in the city, in the country and in the world. What parent could listen to the Report of the Secretary, giving such a glowing account of the success and usefulness of the Sunday school, without having all his sympathies enlisted in the holy cause? What teacher could hear

the earnest words of those who addressed the meeting, without feeling his heart "burn within him," and without being encouraged to go on in his efforts? Who that has met with success, but was stimulated to higher exertions? Who that has experienced seasons of discouragement and almost despair, but was animated on that evening to renew and redouble his energy, and resolved to plant the seed in faith, and look to God for "the increase?" Who could look around upon the children above him, and observe their happy faces, without being deeply impressed with the responsibility of his office? Who could learn of the death of a respected and useful brother, a pioneer in the cause, without sincerely reflecting upon his own destiny in another world, and resolving to fit himself for the Sunday school of Heaven? Who could leave the meeting on that occasion, without resolving to go to his pupils, and teach them to be religious by becoming religious *himself?* We could not resist the influences of these feelings. A kind of spiritual magnetism pervaded the whole assembly, and affected all. When we entered the church, we recollected the last anniversary of the Society, and hoped that this might prove as interesting as that. And our hopes were not disappointed; our anticipations were more than realized. We heard the voice of supplication and prayer from the venerable patriarch, we heard the gratifying account of the last campaign in the holy cause, we listened to the voice of sympathy and encouragement from pastors and brother teachers, we were cheered by the sweet harmony of happy children, and we could not suppress an emotion of gratitude to God for the bright prospect set before us; we could not but unite in the prayer that we might be successful in training up these young immortals for immortality. We have often been filled with hope, and we have often been almost overcome with despair. But

when we attend such a meeting as this, and learn that we are not *alone* in our efforts, that others also have their seasons of hope and despair, then we feel encouraged to go on and persevere. We were called to reflect upon the duties of a Sunday school teacher, the kind of instruction which he should impart, the spirit which he should possess, the nobleness of his object, the importance of the Sabbath school as the true missionary society, the only sure foundation of our country's prosperity, and lastly, by the remarks of our President, the destiny of the Sunday school teacher in another world. Here was afforded abundant material for meditation and study through life, and we doubt not that an abiding impression was made upon the mind of every teacher present. We trust that the influence of this anniversary will be observed in all the Sabbath schools which were there represented.

We must allude again to the musical part of the services, which was under the direction of Mr. Amos Baker, and was one of the most interesting features of the occasion. Who could listen to the sweet strains coming from almost infant lips, without feeling that they came from earnest, simple, loving hearts? Who could hear those young and happy boys and girls, without praying that they might be trained up in the way to heaven, there to join the angelic choir, and behold their Saviour, who loved little children? Who could reflect one moment, without resolving himself to "love little children," and to trust in God for strength and support in all his trials and difficulties as a teacher? The children listened with deep attention to the words addressed to them, and we trust that they left a deep impression upon their hearts. And we doubt not that all, pastors, teachers, parents and children, will ever treasure in their memories, the sanctifying influences of this interesting and holy occasion.

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* Deceased.

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1843.

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Communications to be addressed to Lewis G. Pray, 39 Allen Street, Boston.

Extract from the Report of the Agent, Rev. F. T. Gray.

"It has occurred to your agent that it would be well for the Society to consider the expediency of having Life Members. The suggestion has struck many very favorably, as by this means the teachers and parents would have an opportunity of testifying their affection and regard to the Pastor and Superintendent of their Sunday School by making them members of the Sunday School Society."

At a recent meeting of the Society, the following article was made a part of the Constitution :

Art. 12. The sum of Ten Dollars paid into the treasury, by or for any one person, shall constitute him a Life Member of the Society.

THE

SIXTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH AN ABSTRACT OF THE

ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-NINTH OF MAY, 1844.

BOSTON:
SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS.
1844.

I. R. BUTTS, PRINTER,
SCHOOL STREET.

REPORT.

In presenting the Sixteenth Annual Report, we are reminded of many who have labored with us in times past, and whose voices of encouragement will never more be heard. While they were yet upon earth, their hearts ever warm with Christian affection, manifested for the cause in which we are engaged the strongest sympathy. In the days of their life they were faithful, and when they departed they left us the rich inheritance of their example and the memory of their counsels.

Since our last anniversary two who were respected and beloved officers of this Society have gone up into heaven: They rest from their labors. While here they did a work which will never be forgotten, and their memories, by all who knew them, will always be sacredly cherished. Ware and Storer were in some respects of a kindred spirit. They had matured and disciplined minds, enriched with treasures of thought, ripe in experience and full of spiritual power. They were both dignified in their manners, yet humble and affectionate. They were both characterized by simplicity and earnestness. They were patient and candid in opposition, yet firm as adamant. They were respected by all, but by none were they respected more than they were beloved. They had both that sincere desire to be *useful*, which made their lives a succession of good deeds. As dials have been formed, where time was measured by opening flowers, so their days and

hours were numbered by the unfolding of generous acts and beautiful affections.

Who does not remember with tender emotions the beloved disciple who moved among us with such unaffected meekness; or who can forget that devoted witness of Truth, who left the endearments of home to place himself on the frontier that he might gather around him a people who should be faithful to God. The one passed away after a lingering illness, in which he sought, even in his latest moment, to do somewhat for the good of others.

"The strength of his affections added strength
Unto his soul. He had a mind that would aspire
To heaven, and faith gave wings to his desire.
——————— Nothing could divorce
His ready lips from the profound discourse
Of true religion. Nothing could prevent
His just endeavors. Time he thought misspent
If not employed to good.
His tongue was never traitor to his heart;
Truth was the hand that pointed to the way
Where full content and rich salvation lay."

And one in the midst of a most useful career — having prepared for his departure, and spoken an affectionate farewell, rested in a pleasant sleep, and never arose — save in the spirit.

They lie in their saintly rest,
Their labors all are done;
The work that they loved the best,
Their crown of life is won,
The dead in the Lord are blest.

It will be remembered that the Rev. Mr. Muzzey, (the former Secretary of this Society,) visited Europe during the last year. While absent he wrote an interesting account of some of the schools he had visited, which was read at the last anniversary.

We are happy in being able to lay before the Society at this time a more extended view of his experience while abroad.

"I found (he writes,) in all the countries I visited, a growing attention paid to the great subject of Sabbath School instruction. Catholic and Protestant, Churchmen

and Dissenters, all seem anxious to do more for the religious education of the young than has hitherto been done. The increasing facilities for communication, and the spread of intelligence, to say nothing of the rivalry of sects, are prompting all Christians to take a part in this noble work.

"The best Sunday Schools I had an opportunity of seeing were in Great Britain. Much is done by this institution in England, although most of the efforts there made are in behalf of the poor. I saw a fine school of this class in the Rev. Mr. Aspland's society at London. The order which prevailed there was remarkable. I thought it a pattern in this respect for some of our schools in America. The children appeared also quite intelligent; it did my heart good to see their bright faces, and to mark the tokens of joy that beamed in every eye. Indeed, one thing is certain, that these children have a cordial love of the Sunday School. Said the Rev. Mr. Philps, a minister to the poor in London, 'My great difficulty is to keep the children from coming to my school *too young*.'

"I enjoyed the privilege of attending the anniversary breakfast of the English Unitarian Sunday School Association. It was a delightful occasion. A much larger number was present, I was told, than ever before, and all seemed happy at the prospect of increased interest and improvement in this great cause. Out of forty-eight schools which belong to the Association, forty reported themselves at that meeting. Mr. Vidler, who is one of the city ministers to the poor, gave an excellent report. Our friends in England reciprocated most warmly the interest and sympathy I expressed to them in behalf of the Unitarians in this country. May our mutual kind words lead us to emulate one another in good works.

"One thing I observed in the schools abroad, was the great stress laid by the teachers upon doctrinal instruction. It constitutes, in some cases, the burden of their labors. Perhaps we are in danger of going to the opposite extreme. Are not our teachers sometimes remiss in this respect? They explain to their children the customs of the Jews,

and they are laudably zealous to inculcate the plain precepts of Christian morality. But they are frequently almost silent in regard to doctrinal opinions. Is this right? I answer — NO. Other denominations do not take this course. The Church of England, I found, was earnestly engaged in teaching her children the approved doctrines of her catechism and liturgy. Catholic France, Italy, Belgium, were all employed in instilling the distinctive views of "mother church" into the minds of the young. Nor are the Protestants of Europe deficient in this practice. At Frankfort I saw children coming to the Sunday School; and, taking a book from one of these little ones, I found it contained the doctrinal opinions of Luther. Is it well to leave the child's mind wholly uninformed upon doctrines? To those who thus think, we would recommend the perusal of *Mr. Webster's* speech in the case of Stephen Girard's will.

"No branch of the church has yet ventured to withhold all instruction on doctrines from the young. Shall we be the first to try this perilous experiment? Is not the Sunday School the fit place to teach our youth what they must sometime learn, if we would not leave them through life to be driven about by every wind of doctrine.

"Another point suggested by my observation, is the importance of keeping our children in the Sunday School until they are of an age to unite with the church. I saw in Paris, and elsewhere, the touching spectacle of Catholic youth robed in white, for the occasion of their first communion. They were usually, I should judge, from fourteen to eighteen years old, — and what more becoming than thus, in the dew of their youth, to lay their hearts on the altar of Christ. Can we not do something to secure this desirable result among the young of our Sunday Schools? May not the church be made in this way a bond, pure and unfailing, between the childhood and age of immortal souls?

"Let me say, in conclusion, a word on the great subject of reverence, as connected with the character, and especially the devotional spirit of our children. While my

heart was pained at the superstitions of many of her forms and ceremonies, I was still pleased with the peculiar *devoutness* of the adherents of the Catholic church. It was delightful to see the young enter the majestic cathedrals of the old world, and kneel and repeat their prayers with such apparent devotedness and reverence. Shall we, with our superior intelligence, fail to incite our youth to an equal piety? Let it not be conceded that *error* has more power than *truth*. I do, and must believe, that if our teachers were first spiritually minded themselves, and then made it a distinct aim to awaken reverence in the minds of their children, they would all ultimately succeed in this attempt. Let us place this high mark before us — and strive and hope and faint not, never forgetting that all true wisdom and power comes from on high, and that there we must seek them."

Among foreign correspondents — a letter has been received from the Rev. Mr. Woods, dated Lewis, Sussex. In speaking of the Sunday Schools of England, he says:

"These valuable institutions are spreading among us, and (along with our domestic missions) are drawing forth more and more of the public interest. Indeed, I am inclined to think that a more deep and earnest spirit of religious zeal is springing up in our body, and I may say, in the religious public in general. Men are coming to think more seriously of what they are bound to do for themselves and for others; and exertions are made now for great objects, such as our fathers would never have deemed possible."

A letter from the daughter of the late Dr. Carpenter, dated February 26, of this year, says:

"Our Sunday Schools have been going on much as in preceding years. We have tried monthly Teachers' meetings for conversation on subjects connected with Sunday School instruction, but we find it very difficult to make these meetings as useful and interesting as could be wished; too much devolves on a few older teachers. There are many difficulties with us in carrying out such a plan *usefully*. At one of the meetings we read much

of your last Report with great interest, and it excited an interesting discussion. You may always bear in mind, when we speak of our schools, that they contain exclusively the children of the poor.

"More and more strongly do I feel the great beauty and the high value of this institution It carries the sympathies of the rich to the poor in the most impressive way, through the medium of religion. Most imperfectly do we carry it out; but I have strong faith that (however weak and inefficient our efforts are,) some good seed is sown, which, even if it lies long deeply buried in the soil, will spring up and blossom when exposed to the influence of the light and the refreshing dew of Gospel grace, perhaps to the ploughshare of affliction.

"A plan has been recently brought under our notice, which we have not yet tried, but which I hope we may. A clergyman of the Orthodox persuasion has published a Harmony of the Gospels, with copious notes and maps, for the use of Schools, — having found, by visits to many Sunday Schools throughout the kingdom, that there was generally a lamentable want of preparation on the part of the Teachers, and of system in the general course of Scripture instruction in the schools. He held a meeting in one of the Orthodox Chapels here, to which all Teachers of Sunday Schools were invited, ourselves among the number. He explained the nature of a Harmony, and showed the importance of maps of Palestine being used as illustrations, and advised that the superintendent should every Sunday, at the beginning of School, read a passage sufficient for the lesson of the day, and give full notes and explanations of it, with maps; that all the Teachers should make that passage the ground-work of that day's instruction, in the youngest classes of course taking the simple historical record, and rising in the highest to a critical examination of the passage. At appointed times the Superintendent should publicly examine the whole School, and thus a stimulus would be given both to teachers and children to perfect such lessons. This plan appears good. Teachers who have not studied the

Harmony would find it very difficult to base their instructions on it without such aid from the Superintendent. The more I study the history of our Savior's ministry in the Harmony, the more do I feel the vividness and reality imparted by it. We have for some time instructed the *older* classes in the Harmony, and always use maps. This gentleman said in his lecture that the employment of a Harmony and map would help to defend the children "against the *blasphemies of the Unitarians*," as they could see the very spot where the three persons of the Trinity all appeared together, viz., on the banks of the Jordan at the Baptism!! and where Jesus showed ubiquity, omniscience and omnipotence, by healing the nobleman's son at a distance!! We are accustomed to be so spoken of here. I sent him a copy of my father's Harmony, and received from him a copy of his book in return. I greatly desire that a Harmony could be prepared with maps and notes for Teachers, without any doctrinal peculiarity. Our Savior declares the great doctrines we hold plainly enough, without any comment from us."

The Rev. Mr. Harrington, of Providence, who for a number of years has had the charge of two Sunday Schools, writes as follows:

"In regard to the discipline of a Sunday School, we need not be anxious to propose new theories, or to invent new systems. There is something deeper and more material than theories and systems; something that can measurably supply the lack of these, but for the need of which no theory or system can ever compensate. We more require vivid impressions of what is old, than fancied assistance from something new. There are truths, trite and wearisome to the indifferent, that must fill the mind of the Sunday School Superintendent and Teacher with ever fresh and glowing emotion, if he would hope to realize his faintest anticipations.

"The future of a child in connection with the world, and its own soul, must be the inspiration of action. This high, solemn, and invigorating thought, must be the fountain of love and interest; deep, fervent, Christian love,

and strong enduring interest. Having this, we start with something better than theories and devices, and without which, theories and devices will surely prove fruitless.

"Actuated by such a principle, the next point is to give it an expression, that will attract the child and call out its sympathies. It is only in this relation that any system of management is of importance. The simplest way, then, in which the feelings of the scholar can be enlisted, is by far the best way. This end, it has seemed to me, is best accomplished by making the child, as far as possible, *an assistant in every exercise.* He is thus identified with it, and it produces an immediate influence over his attention. In the devotional exercises, for instance, I am accustomed to pray WITH, not FOR the children. They are taught to respond to every sentence, and an endeavor is made to enter into the feelings of childhood, to employ only the simplest phraseology, and to lead in the prayer, not as a superintendent or teacher, but as a child, — a weak, sinful, erring child. Thus the prayer is made the prayer of the children, and a devotional feeling and interest are communicated that could not otherwise be obtained.

"An address, or general lesson, is a part of the routine of most Sunday Schools, but it is too frequently only a formal presentation of abstract truths, that fall upon the ear of childhood, as cold and meaningless as so much of utterance in an unknown tongue. Experience has taught me that in addressing children, the abstract truth that it is desirable to convey, must be introduced incidentally, not formally. And yet there is often great error in the use of illustrations. They cover and conceal the moral or the truth which they are only intended to enforce, and they are often also too elaborate and far-sought. They want the life and vividness of realities. I am accustomed to derive my topics of instruction from the passing events of the day, more especially from incidents that I may have noticed among children. They may be trifling in themselves, and yet of the greatest value as themes for the Sunday School lesson. We may gather thus, in our daily walks, a fund of subjects of the most attractive and

interesting character; and then in addressing a school, the children should not be talked TO or AT, but WITH. The speaker must so enter into the feelings of the children, and be so fully interested, as to be able to elicit free replies to the questions that should be constantly interspersed. Indeed, to fulfil the object, half the addresses should be in the form of questions, thus teaching the scholars to think for themselves, and communicating vivid impressions.

"If this method be fully and properly carried out, the little flock will hang upon your words, eager, many of them, to hear and reply to the questions as they may be proposed. Interest is thus universally generated, and a unity of feeling and action given to the school that will prove of direct and peculiar importance.

"It is only by stimulating interest in this manner that the beauty of order can be secured, — the very life of order and interest. If you attempt to enforce it without this life, the effort will tend to increase insubordination. But where interest is vivid, prompt, resolute, energetic, government (under ordinary circumstances,) will be readily respected and obeyed."

One who has been an efficient Superintendent in a Sunday School for fourteen years, and who still continues with unabated earnestness at his post, writes as follows:

"It is true the Sunday School is a *voluntary* association, that its labors are all *voluntary*. Yet are we not bound to fidelity, even greater fidelity, in thus assuming a voluntary trust? We take upon ourselves the charge of immortal spirits, to educate, to refine, to prepare for heaven; and in thus assuming this trust, ought we not to see to it, that our duties are well performed. We would not magnify the importance of the Sunday School, or press too heavily on the Teacher sacred responsibilities. Yet we cannot but feel that in taking upon ourselves the office of a religious Teacher and guide to the young, we *should not do it lightly*, or feel that the duties may be *done*, or left *undone*, as suits our convenience or pleasure. If the Sunday School is of value, it is important that it

should be carried forward in the full spirit and measure of its usefulness. We would not have it merely linger on, in a cold, inanimate existence. We would not have the duties of the teacher performed *grudgingly* or as a *task*. We think the teacher should enter upon his duties with a feeling of proper responsibility, — with right motives, and a conscientious desire and determination to discharge those duties with at least as much fidelity as any other duties he may take upon himself, of a *business* or *social* character. We think he should make it his aim *never to permit his class at the Sunday School to assemble, without being met by himself or a substitute.*

"We need hardly say that nothing is more disheartening to the pupils, and injurious to the best interests of the School, than the habitual absence of teachers. *We think a teacher* should no more leave his class *unprovided* for, when absent, than a merchant should thus leave his store or business in absenting himself from the city unprovided for. This being the case, we should be gratified with the sight of *full* classes, and well-filled schools.

"We think teachers' meetings should be punctually attended. If we regard them as useful, if they are an important part of our duty, is it right for teachers habitually to absent themselves from these meetings? We believe it will be found as a general rule, that the prosperity a Sunday School enjoys, is commensurate with the fidelity of the teachers in attending these meetings. There are undoubtedly some individuals who attach less importance to them, and consider them dull and uninteresting; but where such teachers are to be found — do they cherish the right spirit? Do they contribute their part? If we would have unity of purpose, sympathy of heart, and fervency of soul in this holy work, we believe that these feelings and purposes can no where be better inspired than at teachers' meetings.

"God grant that those teachers who are at present engaged in this holy work may not come short of their duty. May they feel that a high and responsible trust is committed to their charge, for which they will be required to

give an account, and may they seek that wisdom and strength from on high, to guide and sustain them, without which all human effort is unavailing."

The Rev. Mr. Palfrey, of Barnstable, writes as follows:

"Our organization is pretty complete, if we can but keep it in energetic operation. Class papers are kept by all the teachers, by means of which all cases of absence are noted, and the average attendance of the school can be exactly ascertained; and we endeavor, by a knowledge of this fact, and also by mentioning in the school every Sunday how many pupils are present, to give the children an interest in the character of the school for punctuality.

"We have, for the present, by way of experiment, discarded the use of question books on the New Testament. We set all the classes that study it the same lesson on the same day, and have a teachers' meeting every week, in which that lesson is examined, both in a general way, and with particular reference to the instruction suitable for children that may be gathered from it.

"It appears to me of great importance that there should be a progressive scheme of study in a Sunday School, so that a child from the time of entrance into it, to the age of sixteen, should be constantly interested and animated by a consciousness of advancement. I fear that our schools frequently fail in interest and usefulness, in consequence of the children being led round from year to year in the same circle. If some one would publish a pretty minute syllabus of such a course, I think it would be the greatest service that could now be rendered to Sunday School instruction. It would indeed be next to impossible to arrange such a one, that should be equally adapted to the various capacities and conditions of our schools throughout the country, but it could be modified by the discretion of ministers and superintendents, and might be a valuable help, where it was not implicitly followed.

"Sunday School libraries have long been to me a source of anxiety and doubt. I have neither time nor space here to express myself fully on the subject. I will put my

scruples into the shape of a few questions. Is not the manner in which our libraries are supplied with new books every year fostering in children bad habits of reading, encouraging an undue craving for novelty, causing children to become discontented with good old books? Is it not desirable that there should be a distinction in children's minds between reading that which is proper for Sunday and that which is allowable on week days? Do not our children generally understand that the books of the Sunday School library are proper to be read on Sunday, and are they not in fact read on that day? Are all the books in our libraries such as we are willing to put into children's hands with this understanding? I should be very glad to listen to a discussion of these questions by a body of experienced teachers. I would add, that, whatever might once have been said of the expediency of supplying children with secular reading by means of Sunday School libraries, has much less force since common school district libraries almost every where exist."

A Teacher in the city writes:—

"As you have given a very general invitation for any one to offer a suggestion 'respecting the best means of making our Sunday Schools more useful,' I embrace the opportunity to say a few words, especially as I am not a Superintendent, and can therefore present my views from a different point of observation, than that of many of your correspondents.

"The devotional exercise I would have a response to the prayer offered by the Superintendent. Children are more interested in this form of prayer than in one to which they do not respond. If more than one prayer is thought best, I should always use that beautiful one, uttered by the Savior, and hallowed by his use. In some schools the Lord's prayer alone is used. There are objections to this which are urged with some degree of reasonableness, for it is said the pupils become habituated to a constant repetition of the same prayer, and it ceases to become an act of the mind, and becomes a mechanical performance. If this be true in relation to even a small part of

the school, it is sufficient to show the necessity of a change. Children cannot be expected to feel the same deep interest in this exercise as adults, still it is essential so to arrange this part of our worship, that all who take part in it can feel its solemnity and influence.

"The general lesson, as it is called, or the address made to the whole school, is deserving of some consideration. Too little importance has been attached to this exercise and too often has it been committed to inexperienced hands. The Superintendent, in courtesy to a friend, who may chance to come in, invites him to address the school — the friend declines, not having prepared himself to speak, but being urged, he consents, and attempts to say something, at the same time honestly telling the school he has nothing to say — goes on talking about things he is not familiar with — exhausts the patience of the pupils, and leaves no good impression on their minds.

"There is also another class of speakers, they are men of highly cultivated minds. The orator, the statesman, the clergyman, &c., when they address a Sunday School their first object is to bring minds and thoughts *down* to the capacity of children, but in striving not to *over*-shoot the mark, they fall far *short* of it, and make their address so juvenile as only to excite mirthfulness. The truth is, the intellect and heart must both be reached, but neither at the sacrifice of the other.

"A third class, are fluent speakers — ready upon all occasions, always happy to see children, and have a pretty story to tell them. These of all others do the most harm. Children are ever eager for the marvellous and strange, and they seize upon the story and neglect the moral. I would not be understood as condemning the usefulness of a story as an illustration, occasionally introduced. Our Savior often spake in parables, and what our Master did we are authorized to imitate — but I have so often witnessed the excitement produced by a story, which has been spun out for fifteen minutes, that I am satisfied the good is more than counterbalanced by the

evil, the kernel of wheat is lost in the chaff. A general lesson should be short, simple, serious, practical, and of a decidedly religious character, not to be addressed to children as children, but as religious and immortal beings, capable of feeling and comprehending its power and spirit. But it may be urged that children will tire of serious subjects all the time — occasionally they must be regaled upon something that is amusing, pleasant and sprightly. I answer, the Sunday School is not the place for these exhibitions. The hour allotted for it is but brief, and much is necessarily crowded into it, therefore the precious moments should not be wasted or spent in that which profiteth not, but they should be used to the edification of all, by inciting one another to greater diligence, by quickening our love to God, our faith in Jesus Christ, by inculcating the precepts of the Gospel, by enforcing our duties, and inspiring us with a love for all that is sublime and pure and holy.

"I would suggest to those that have the general lesson at the close of the school, the advantage of a change to the commencement of it. The teacher then has an opportunity to follow out a train of thought, or take up some subject that has been introduced by the speaker. I have often found this of great advantage. The class have become interested in the general lesson, and some question is started by a pupil, which affords abundant scope for enlargement and practical application, and thus the hour has been more profitably spent, than it would have been by confining ourselves to the lesson prepared for the occasion."

Letter from one who has been connected with a Sunday School eighteen years, and a Superintendent seventeen years.

"Is there not a material deficiency in many of our Sunday Schools,—the deficiency, we mean, of general exercises? Or, if these are not wholly wanting, are they generally of the highest, best and most appropriate character? By general exercises we mean, singing, scripture lessons, addresses, and prayers, by the Superintendent, in connexion with the whole school. Is it not the more

common mode to open the school by the pastor or preacher of the day, with prayer in the usual form, to which the children are only silent listeners? Are these prayers usually adapted to the capacities or wants of the child, either in language or sentiment? Is there often any singing? Is there frequently any addresses or remarks to the whole school?

"Now there are no exercises connected with a Sunday School more important than these; and no cause whatever should prevent their general adoption. Singing is one of the most admirable means for exciting devotional feelings, and filling the minds of the young with devotional language and thoughts. With a very little practice, children may be easily taught by rote, a sufficient number of tunes to answer all practical purposes. They imitate readily, and they engage in the exercise with all their hearts. A good Sunday School should always be opened with this exercise. The hymn should be followed by the reading of selected portions of scripture, from the Bible or a Service-book By this exercise the best portions of this holy book are made familiar to the child, and the effect must be lasting, as it will be general. A shorter or longer address should follow. It may be either original or selected. Simple truths in plain and simple language, is all that is necessary, if uttered with feeling and interest. After this, the prayer from a service-book, first uttered by the Superintendent and responded to afterward by the whole school. These together, should not, and need not occupy more than thirty minutes. The class lessons follow, to which thirty minutes more may be given, and then, the school should be brought to a close by singing a short hymn, and the use of the Lord's prayer, the Superintendent leading, and the teachers and children uniting in the service by response.

"If such a course, or one somewhat similar, could be adopted in all our schools, we can think of nothing which would improve their character, or increase their usefulness more. By these exercises, the impression is made at once, and upon *all*. If, in any of the classes, the teach-

ing is deficient, it is supplied in part, at least, by these. If the teaching is good, these prepare the mind for it, and impress it the more deeply afterward. By their general character, they enlist most strongly the sympathies of the whole; and in consequence, the school becomes a bond of common and deep interest. By them, the language of Scripture is made a part of the child's intellectual furniture; and from the pleasing and interesting manner in which it is obtained,

'A glory gilds the sacred page!'

By them, the child prays for himself in language adapted to his capacity, and in the expression of wants and desires which he feels and understands; and by these, *learns* also to pray, so that when absent from the school, or when finally he shall leave it, prayer will be to him a reality, a desire, a habit. Devotion will be enkindled, and his whole moral and religious nature exercised and strengthened.

"Two things only are necessary to secure this great blessing for all our schools. The *first* is, to throw the responsibility of it entirely upon the Superintendents. Make it their duty. Have it distinctly understood that its performance is expected of them, and is indispensable. All good writers on the subject agree, that it is *the* duty of the Superintendent, and should be left to no one else. The *second* is, to provide the schools with a service-book; that is, a book containing hymns, scripture lessons, and prayers. Two or three of these are now for sale; and every school should be furnished with a sufficient number; a copy for the Superintendent, and one for each of the teachers and children. Whenever this course shall have been adopted, a new interest will be given to all our schools, and a new and greater power to religious instruction.

"Let me say, that we have adopted the suggestion of your last Report, and two numbers of a Teachers' Journal have been prepared, and read at our teachers' meetings, two months intervening between each. The matter, consisting of sixteen pages, to our surprise, has been mostly original. It has excited a warm and deep interest; in-

creased the number in attendance at those meetings, and excited a stronger interest, as we think, for improvement, than has ever existed in our school before. We recommend the plan to others. Appoint one or two editors, male and female; request communications, original or selected, and the work is done."

A correspondent writing from Newburyport, says:—

"The Bible, particularly the New Testament, is the most common study of the school, though other text-books have been used for the older classes, and some of the younger children commit hymns to memory, or are instructed by reading or conversation. No questions, with answers affixed to them, are used in the school, and no rewards given for punctual attendance or attention to lessons. The object deemed most important is to induce the scholars to THINK, to *exercise* THEIR OWN MINDS, and by that exercise to arrive at a knowledge of the purposes of life and the responsibilities involved in them. They consider this the best method of awakening those aspirations, and calling forth those principles, which will ennoble the soul and lead it on to a higher life."

The Rev. Mr. Sears, of Lancaster, writes as follows:—

"I do not think any uniform course can be adopted in conducting Sunday Schools. *The Sunday School will always be, as the teachers are.* If their hearts are full of interest in their work, that interest will seek its own form and expression. Of this I feel confident, however, that teachers do not generally speak with sufficient directness to the individual wants and experiences of the children. The *teaching is too general or too historical.* I think also we have assumed too much respecting the purity and innocence of childhood.

"I am becoming more convinced of another fact — that our question-books and text-books might better be dispensed with, and that we should use *the Bible and that alone.* Of course a judicious teacher would make selections, but I do think *the Bible* is capable of being made more interesting without the aid of manuals than with. This single point might be enlarged into a volume, and

I wish some one would worthily set forth the wonderful adaptation of the style of scripture to the mind of childhood. How portions well selected and used are calculated to charm the imagination, while they put living words into the memory, whose meaning shall unfold and unfold forever.

"In fine, why can we not have the same sort of teaching in the Sunday School, that Mr. Mann describes as belonging to the schools of Prussia, where the teacher's mind is so full and glowing with his theme, and prepared with illustrations, that its very outpouring is delightful to hear, and the attention of the youngest child is held captive.

"This we may have when the talent and intellect, which exist in our congregations, becomes consecrated to Christ."

Passing by much which would be interesting, we would present a statement respecting the labors of the Associate Agents of this Society.

"Soon after the Annual Meeting of last year, the Agency was reorganized by the appointment of the same persons as before, with the exception of W. P. Jarvis, Esq., who declined a reappointment, and whose place was supplied by the choice of Isaiah Bangs, Esq., of Cambridgeport. Having recognised anew the principle of accepting all invitations, however great the distance or expense, they gave early public notice that they were ready to engage in the work of their appointment. In consequence, calls were made upon them early, — were numerous and frequent, — and continued to the close of the season. It is not a little singular, that in one week in June the whole agency were absent from the city, one in the State of Maine, one in the State of New Hampshire, one to the towns of Rowe and Deerfield, in Franklin County, one to the town of Templeton, in Worcester County, and the others nearer home.

"In discharge of their duty, they have visited forty-eight towns, in five different States; of which thirty-seven were in Massachusetts, viz., Ashby, Dover, Uxbridge, Bridge-

water, Sherburne, North Beverly, Walpole, Mansfield, Needham, Hubbardston, Danvers, Charlestown, Boston, Milton, Dorchester, Plymouth, Quincy, West Dedham, Framingham, Salem, Dedham, Haverhill, Cohasset, Lowell, Boxford, Hingham, Lincoln, Brookline, Templeton, Bernardston, Warwick, Medford, Littleton, Deerfield, Rowe, Northfield, Lowell. *Five* in Maine, viz., Augusta, Hallowell, Portland, Saco, and Standish. *Four* in New Hampshire, viz., Nashua, Concord, Wilton and Keene. *One* in Vermont, viz, Brattleboro', and *one* in Rhode Island, viz., Providence.

"The whole number of *visits* has been *eighty-one*, being in addition of one to each of the towns named, eighteen visits to various schools in the city; one visit in addition to the schools in Dover, Beverly, Sherburne, Barton Square School in Salem; five to the schools in Dorchester; three to the schools in Hingham, and three to towns having two schools each.

"The number of teachers in schools visited was			1,392
"	"	" pupils, - - - -	8,094
"	"	addressed, pupils, teachers and parents, - - - -	22,879
"	"	miles travelled, - - -	3,488
"	"	addresses delivered, - -	100
The whole expense of travelling,		- -	$105,72
"	"	expense of the Agency, -	181,47

"Of these visits, twenty-four were made by Mr. Pray; twenty-four by Mr. Thayer; eleven by Mr. Bangs; eight by Rev. Mr. Gray; seven by Rev. Mr. Waterston; eight by Dr. Flagg; seven by Mr. Bayley; one by Rev. Mr. Muzzey.

"They have published but one additional tract during the year, "*The Baron and his Son*," the edition of which was 4,000. They have distributed during the year, to the various schools visited, 8,700 tracts, or, 115,200 pages; being an increase over last year of 1,162.

"Contributions have been made to the funds, from the Sunday School in Rowe, $5,00; from the School in Keene, $7,00; from the School in Templeton, $12,00;

and from the School in Danvers, $2,50, — in all, $26,50. They have received from the sale of tracts, $16,25; and from nine life members, $90,00, — making a total income for the Agency, of $132,75.

"Their expenses have been for agents, 105,72; for tracts, $67,50; for sundries, $8,25, making a total of $181,47, or $48,72 more than their receipts. The whole expenses of the Society have been $279,19. Total income, $218,75. Expenditures over income, $60,44.

"The following are the names of the individuals made life members the last year: Rev. Mr. Lambert of East Cambridge; Lowell M. Stone of East Cambridge; Rev. David Fosdick of Sterling; Rev. Samuel Osgood of Providence; Mr. Artemas Locke, Jr., of West Cambridge; W. G. Babcock, Superintendent of Bulfinch Street Sunday School in Boston; James S. Lewis, Esq., Hingham; James A. Waite, Esq., of Hubbardston; and Rev. Edward Stone, by the Barnstable Sabbath School Association.

"In conclusion, the Agents would express their deep conviction, (strengthened by the experience of the past year,) that the work in which they are engaged is one of great and comprehensive good. So far as they are at liberty to form a judgment or express an opinion, their labors are viewed in a favorable light. It is certain, that their aid has been sought with greater interest during the past year than at any time heretofore; that the varied meetings in which they have been called to participate, have been conducted on the highest moral and religious principles; and that, invariably, at their close, the warmest expressions have been made of unmingled satisfaction. And they would take this occasion to acknowledge their deep indebtedness and gratitude to the various clergymen, teachers, and associations whom they have met, for the hospitality, courtesy and kindness which they have so uniformly manifested."

It may be proper to state that during the past year two Hymn Books have been prepared by individuals holding offices in this Society, for the aid of Sunday Schools.

We might also have spoken of *County Conventions*,

which have this year been of unusual interest, forming almost a new era in the history of Sunday Schools; and of the city union meetings, which have occurred in this city each month, and which have awakened a good feeling and elicited interesting remarks. But this we must at present omit.

Before closing, we would only add that, while by positive statistics, from the prisons and courts of our land, crime is declared to have decreased within the past year, in proportion to the increase of population, — a fact almost unparalleled in the history of the world, and which may well prove inspiring to every lover of his race, — still, there is darkness to be enlightened and evil to be overcome. And whether we listen to those who would disorganize society, and overturn its most hallowed institutions, or observe the scenes which at times disgrace even the council-chambers of our nation, or hear the shouts of popular disorder, breaking the stillness of midnight, while the sky glares with the flames of churches and dwellings, kindled by the ruthless hand of the incendiary, while human blood flows before the violence of insane mobs, we must acknowledge that *the work of the Christian is not yet over*, that the time has not come when we can safely close the doors of the Sunday School. Our liberties are based upon religion, and upon *that* must the welfare of the Republic depend.

We see also that the great question is coming up in Protestant America, whether even the Bible can there be read in our common schools. To the Sunday School therefore must we turn. The Genius of Christianity must speak with her heavenly voice to childhood, and direct it to the path of duty.

There is an appeal, as from God, calling upon Christians to be faithful, and there is no more quiet or unobtrusive yet important sphere, than the Sunday School, to aid the usefulness of which is the grand purpose we would keep in view.

R. C. WATERSTON,
Corresponding Secretary.

ANNIVERSARY

OF

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

[We take from the Christian Register the following interesting and correct account of the proceedings and speeches as reported by a Teacher.]

The Sixteenth Anniversary of this Society was celebrated on Wednesday evening, May 29th, at Rev. Mr. Gannett's church. A large audience of pastors, teachers and friends of the Sunday School were present. The services of the evening commenced with a voluntary on the organ, which was followed by a chant sung by the sweet voices of a choir of about sixty children. Prayer was then offered by the venerable Rev. Dr. Kendall, of Plymouth, who supplicated the divine blessing on the cause which had brought us together, and upon all who are engaged in it. This fervent address to the throne of grace was followed by the singing of the following hymn to the tune of '*Flow on sweet Afton.*'

Our friends now we welcome, who've met with us here;
Our teachers we greet, at this altar so dear;
Now brothers, and sisters, with hearts full of love,
Ring out the glad chorus,—send praises above.

We love in our youth, in life's sunniest days,
To seek for the truth that will wake us to praise;
To join in the anthems that fall on the ear,
Like sweet mellow tones that we've lingered to hear.

O, pure is the truth which the Sunday Schools give,
The Savior is teacher, in him let us live;
While he is our pattern, we'll make him our guide;
We'll live as he lived, and die as he died.

The Annual Report was then read by the Corresponding Secretary, Rev. R. C. Waterston.

After which was sung the following original Hymn, by the children to the tune of '*Go, forget me.*'

Come, says Wisdom, why should pleasure
Steal your hearts from paths like mine?
Come, and make my gems your treasure;
Richer they than diamonds shine.
Children come, and thus arrayed,
Walk with me in beauty rife;
So in thee be all displayed
Pure, the perfect Christian's life.

O, how sweet, when thus are given
Hearts the youngest, brightest, best,
Running in the race for heaven,
That from sin the soul may rest.
Guide us thither, O, our Savior,
Never let us go astray!
God, our Father! grant thy favor,
Life and bliss in endless day.

Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, of Salem, the President of the Society, then spoke to the following effect: "At the close of another year, we have come together to contemplate the past, to observe the present, and to anticipate the future in respect to the Sunday School. How is it possible for us to meet together without regarding the institution of the Sunday School as a Christian institution? In reviewing the life and character of Christ himself, does it not seem that that character would be defective, or the history of that life imperfect, if we were deprived of all record of his interest and regard in the welfare of children? When others repulsed, he received them with open arms, and with a declaration never to be forgotten. And how innocently and naturally the hearts of children then responded to his call. How beautiful is the relation of children to Christ, and of Christ to children! When he entered Jerusalem, he paced its temple

courts, and performed his characteristic works of mercy, his miracles of love. How was he regarded by those in authority? With contempt and scorn. But as he entered those temple courts, the children collected to salute him with their hosannas of praise. The Sunday School is designed for this time and forever to embody and personify the Savior in the hearts of children. A voice still utters what was long ago spoken: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven;" and the call is still made by this institution to all who come within its influence. What the nature of children was when Christ lived, it must be now.

"But I cannot conclude without performing an official if not personal duty. All remember the circumstances under which we closed our last annual meeting, and the deep emotions excited by the announcement of the death of one of our Vice Presidents, the first who ever died in office. While listening then to the voice which arose from the scarcely closed grave of the lamented Rice, another event was in progress, rich in instruction for us, and we ought to listen to it with a profound interest, such as no other event ought to excite.—The death of Ware, at the close of such a life, such a death, rich in all the hallowed and hallowing graces of Christianity, must endear his memory in all our hearts. The death of such a man has a value surpassing that of his life. There is life in such a death to all who hold the faith which he so beautifully expounded and exemplified. He has gone, but he has not departed alone. His death occurred near the commencement of the year, and now, near its close, another Vice President has been called from our midst to join him in Heaven. Rev. Mr. Storer was a man of a kind spirit, and upon all his friends produced the impression of his personal excellence and worth of character. He is gone! they are gone! But still they are not absent from us. They may be present now. It is a peculiar satisfaction derived from the faith of our hearts that assures us of the constant presence and sympathy, and kind recollections of

departed friends. They are gone, yet they are with us, and our grateful hearts with theirs would be united until faith becomes reality.' "

Rev. Mr. Fosdick, of Sterling, spoke upon a point suggested frequently and strongly in the Report of the Secretary. "We mean the use of the Bible in the Sunday School as a more prominent, if not the exclusive text-book for instruction. It is for liberal Christians, who stand in the fore-front of the Protestant ranks in asserting the doctrine of the sufficiency of the Scriptures, to follow out their principles in the instruction of the young. We should present children the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. Some think that they should reach a more mature age before doctrines should be unfolded to them. But such an idea is impracticable. We cannot prevent the mind of a child from being occupied with some views of the doctrines of religion. In teaching doctrines, we should take the Bible as the standard of our instructions. There are other influences in this Age, placed side by side with the Bible. Tradition is placed on a level with the Holy Scriptures, and there is a disposition to detract from their integrity and authority, to regard them as imperfect, and the Gospel as not adapted to be presented to the minds of children. Let us take, then, the Bible for our main text-book, and let none other usurp, as none other can supply its place. Question books might, with advantage, be generally consigned to the use of the teacher in his study and preparation for the Sabbath. If he studies the Scriptures, with this aid, before going to his class, and then presents to his pupils some life-like story from the Old or New Testament, or makes the Gospel the subject of remark, and the means of religious influence, he will accomplish more good than in any other way, and will find success to accompany his efforts."

The children now united their melodious voices in singing the following original hymn to the tune of "*The morning light is breaking.*"

O'er morning's life is breaking
The *Son's* resplendent rays;
Our youthful hearts are waking
To celebrate *his* praise.

The pure and living fountain
Sends out its gushing stream,
A coal from Zion's mountain
Illumes our happy theme.

"The morning light is breaking,"
The light of living truth,
Its inward progress making
To sanctify our youth.
Come, ever blessed Savior!
Come fill us with thy love;
May we in our behavior
Prepare for joys above.

"The morning light is breaking,"
Its radiant beams display
The wisdom we're partaking,
Which ushers in the day —
The promised day of glory,
When seated round his throne,
We'll hear anew the story,
Of God's beloved *Son*.

Rev. Mr. Osgood, of Providence, spoke of the danger of exaggeration in our views of the nature and object of the Sunday School. "Some are apt to think that the Sunday School is a new institution, whereas it is only a new form of an old thing. Many forget the reverence due to the old institution. We are to look upon the Sunday School as owing allegiance to, and forming a part of the church. We must not exaggerate our ideas of the child's nature. It is true that Christ said: 'Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' But does this mean that all the children who attend on Sunday Schools are embryo angels, ready for heaven? The true rendering of this passage is, that of such hearts the Christian church is to be built up; we must begin with the young, if not with their angelic virtue, with their childlike simplicity and trust. They must be taught to give allegiance to the church of Christ. The Sunday School sometimes becomes a secular affair; natural history or some other science is taught, and the Gospel is made a secondary subject or neglected. The New Testament idea is, that young children be considered as members, (not communicants,) of the Christ-

ian church. Christianity is not something which they can choose or reject at pleasure. What folly to do away with the allegiance of young minds to the church of Christ. If Christ should inquire of many, 'where are the lambs of the flock over which you are ordained to minister,' they would be constrained to say, 'we have given them over to the Sunday School, the teachers will take care of them.' Why should this be? Men are ready to feel that they owe obedience to the church. Let us point children up to Jesus, and they will be ready to feel the same idea. We must make them feel that they are enlisted in the cause of Jesus, and that the Sunday School is that sphere in which they may show their allegiance. Christian ministers need to acknowledge this also. No good can be done without looking to a high source for strength and assistance. We must draw from the river which maketh glad the city of our God, looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, and to the Sunday School as constituting a part of the Christian church, and it will awake to new vigor and life. Children, remember this, remember that you are fellow-citizens of the saints of the household of God. Young men and maidens, never forget the songs in which you have this evening united, and never lay them aside when the temptations of life assail you. Lambs of the flock of Christ, God's blessing be with you.

Rev. Mr. Holland, of Rochester, observed that wherever the banner of our faith had been carried, children have been the first to gather around it. The Sabbath School has always grown faster than the society. We must begin at the foundation, and we trust and believe that we may thus raise up a generation to sustain the institutions which we are endeavoring to build up. Text books, if we do not go beneath and beyond them, will not accomplish the true object of the Sabbath School institution. There are deep yearnings, fond desires, strong emotions within the hearts of children, which call for something more than merely secular, historical and statistical instruction. In the Sabbath School connected with the State Prison of New York, instruction has been

given chiefly from the Union Question Book. What was the impression made? On being asked a certain question from the book, the pupil would give the annexed answer, and then begin to laugh and play. A friend who entered the class one day, asked for what religion was given, if it was not to open a bright and glorious prospect of a future world? The fountains of feeling then began to gush forth almost at once into tears, and one solemnly confessed a resolve to lead a new life. We must feel on the subject of religion, cultivate the spirit of love, and from warm and living fountains, bring the truth to those who are thirsting to receive life."

These remarks were succeeded by the following hymn, sung to the tune of "*Invitation.*"

FIRST CHOIR.

Come unto me, the Savior cries,
Children come! Children come!
Flee folly's path; be early wise;
O now come! O now come!
Sit at my feet, and learn of me,
Patient, and meek, and lowly be;
Deny yourselves, and follow me—
Children come! Children come!

SECOND CHOIR.

Yes, blessed Savior! at thy call,
We will come! We will come!
To follow thee, forsaking all;
Now we come! Now we come!
Implant thy spirit in each heart,
Thy truth, and love, and peace impart!
Thus to be with thee where thou art,
We will come! We will come!

Rev. Mr. Harrington, of Providence, offered some excellent remarks to the following effect: "I rise to utter a thought inspired by a single sentence in the Report. 'As the teachers are, so must the school be.' All must feel this to be true. As each individual teacher is, so will his class be. Where interest and attention are manifested on the part of the teacher, we have interest and attention on the part of the children. And where shall we hope to obtain the foundation of love and sympathy and interest? Only from a consciousness of the

value of the truth, and of the value of religion to our own souls, and in no other way. We may have our books of questions and answers, we may do all to interest them, we may be full of anecdote, but they will all prove nothingness unless we know what the truth is. Christ came to bring truth into the world. Do we have it? Do we go to our classes, and show them, by example and precept, that we appreciate the great truths of Christ's Gospel? Do we exhibit humility, simplicity and lowliness? Or do our children see us on the week-day parading the streets for the sake of showing our fine dress? Let us teach the truth above all things as our duty and pleasure. Do our children know that we so value it? Teachers in Jesus Christ, never let them know that you waste hours in frivolous pleasure, that after nights spent in the gayeties of the ball room, you come to assume the solemn duties of the Sunday School. If there are any of us who have not the consciousness of effort for the truth, let them begin to pray for the influence of God's spirit to-night, that they may go to their classes on the next Sabbath more prayerful, more devoted, more true to their responsible trust.—Children, will you help your teachers? We have said a word to encourage them in their duty. Will you come to the Sunday School conscious that you have souls, and seek to train them up for heaven and nothing else in this world? Will you come in the spirit of prayer, and learn to pray, every day? How pleased have I been with your sweet songs! I have heard a great deal of scientific singing, but none which touches my heart more than yours. And if I should ever be so true to my duty as to reach that heaven which is the end of the righteous, it is my most earnest prayer that I may meet you there, and hear you sing the song of the Lamb before God the Father."

Rev. Mr. Cordner, of Montreal, gave an interesting account of the prospects of our cause in England and Ireland. The course of instruction given in the two islands differs in some respects. In England, it is customary to mingle other instruction with religious instruc-

tion, and sometimes even reading and writing are introduced. We justify this mode, however, by the peculiarity of circumstances, which warrants a departure from the system which ought to be followed.—In Ireland, the instruction in the Sunday School is purely religious, the Bible, and the New Testament particularly, being made the text book. The great doctrines of that book are taught, as well as its precepts to be obeyed, and its examples to be followed. The system has wrought well in Ireland. The community has become interested, and more money was collected for the institution during the last year than in any previous years. The Bible is the principal book used in the Sunday School, and one thing we have learned, that we may place the Bible in the hands of the young, without fearing that it will lead them astray. Under certain circumstances, sectarian teaching in a certain sense is necessary. It is often necessary that we insist on some distinctive doctrines. The cause of Sunday Schools in England and Ireland is advancing. The efforts of the city missionaries in London have been exceedingly successful. They have collected large Sunday Schools where the young are taught the principles of moral ty and religion. In Ireland, there are two Sunday School Societies.

We should look upon the mission of the Sunday School teacher as the most exalted, one can bear. He takes the young mind and exerts an influence upon it, which will shape its course for life. Some may become weary of their task. But if they would only recollect the object in view, how could they ever be weary? Besides, how do we know who they are who fill our Sunday Schools? The greatest men arise from the midst of obscurity. Franklin was a poor printer's boy. And with the poet we may say:

> "Full many a gem of purest ray serene
> The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

So within the humble walls of a church, or a Sabbath School room, it only requires that we stir the mental gem in the bed of its obscurity, and it will rise to the surface

by its inherent buoyancy. We have only to bring it within the rays of Christianity, and it will shine with resplendent brilliancy, and cast its light around on all within its influence. Let none then commence the work of Sabbath School teaching, until they understand its importance, and then let them bind themselves to carry out the great work, the sanctification and regeneration of humanity."

Rev. Mr. Waterston, after expressing his regret that modesty had prevented Mr. C. from giving some account of his own Sabbath School and Society, said: "Mr. Cordner has come not only from England and Ireland, bu from Montreal, where he has been laboring, during the past winter, to build up the church of Christ. He has come hither to gain assistance by which a temple may be raised, wherein he may have a Sabbath School and preach the word of God. I hope that we shall show him that we have hearts, and that those who have purses will put their hands into them and contribute generously. I hope that every one who has a thousand dollars will give a hundred, that every one who has a hundred, will give ten, and every one who has ten will give one to sustain the good cause. I trust that he will be able to build up his neat and humble temple, and that the Sabbath School he has formed will prosper and flourish."

The following original hymn was then sung to the tune of "*Song after rain.*

Come away, O come away,
Let us leave mirth and play!
For our Sunday School Teacher
Now calls us together.
Come away then, come away,
And welcome this day!

O the Schools, blest Sunday Schools,
Where are taught life's great rules!
Where salvation's great river
Runs gladdening forever.
To our School then, there to find
Food for soul and for mind.

Glad the sound, O glad the sound,
Echoing all around!
It comes from the Savior
Full of mercy and favor.

Let the sound then, let the sound
Re-echo around!

Haste away then, haste away,
To the courts where they pray!
While each heart rejoices,
There lift we our voices.
Let's away then, let's away,
To learn there, and pray!

As the audience were retiring, the children united their harmonious voices in the following appropriate hymn.

Good night! good night, to speech and song,
Good night! for time is fleeting, —
May memory's voice remind us long
Of this our happy meeting.
And may you wake, with bosoms light,
Unclouded by a sorrow,
From dreams of all you love, to-night,
To pleasant hours to-morrow,
And for a theme,
May every dream,
From Hope her rainbow borrow.
Good night! to all a kind good night.

Good night! good night! we humbly pray,
To heaven our hearts addressing,
Our every thought, and act to day
May meet God's holy blessing.
Pure as the dew unseen ascends,
In morning's sunny hour,
Pure as the spotless lily bends
To heaven her vestal flower,
So purely there,
Oh, let our prayer
Rise to the same good Power.
Good night! to all a kind good night.

We have given only brief and imperfect abstracts of the addresses made on this interesting occasion, but brief and imperfect as they are, we hope that they will be read by those teachers who were unable to be present, with a portion of the satisfaction we enjoyed in listening to them.

We must not close our remarks without alluding to the interest manifested in this meeting by all present. Happy were we again to hear the voice of venerable age addressing the throne of grace in the simplicity and earnestness of childhood. Happy to see so many pastors interested

in the lambs of their flock, and ready to speak a word of encouragement to the teachers. Happy to observe so many teachers present, seeking for more knowledge, that they may accomplish more good. Happy again to behold the smiles, and listen to the harmonious strains of young children. But we trust that pleasure was not the only emotion awakened in the hearts of teachers and the friends of the Sunday School. We hope that the deep truths spoken from sincere hearts will become the subject of meditation and earnest thought as long as we are teachers. We trust that they will purify our hearts, elevate our aims, ennoble our characters, and produce a corresponding impression on our pupils. We were called upon to study the Bible more constantly; to entertain higher views of the church and the Sunday School, and their relation to each other; and to become more prayerful, more devoted, more humble followers of Christ, that both by precept and example, we may teach our pupils to seek the Savior, who was the friend of little children. May we all meditate on these things, until the "fire shall burn" within us, until we shall form earnest resolutions of continued patience and perseverance in our holy work, until we can go to our pupils with the feeling, that "we are what we would have them become." Thus only can we derive any permanent benefit from these annual jubilees of the friends of the Sunday School. Thus only we hope that this anniversary of the Sunday School Society impressed the minds and hearts of every teacher present.

We trust that the children will profit by the advice given them, and that the impressions then made upon their hearts will have a lasting influence upen their lives and characters. We cordially respond to the sentiments of a writer in the Christian World: "Heaven grant that their tempers may always be as sweet as their voices were that night, — that their lives may be as serene and joyful as their countenances were then, — that they may make melody unto the Lord in their hearts as they did in our ears with their voices, and that 'the music of a grateful *piety*' may hush all the discords of their earthly being."

A Teacher.

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1844.

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Communications to be addressed to Lewis G. Pray, Chairman of the Agents, 39 Allen Street, Boston.

As Schools or Societies may be desirous of contributing to the funds of the Agency, to aid in visiting their own and other Schools, and at the same time, to testify their affection and regard for their Pastor or Superintendent, the following article from the Constitution of the Society is subjoined:

Art. 12. The sum of Ten Dollars paid into the treasury, by, or for, any one person, shall constitute him a Life Member of the Society.

THE

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH THE

ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-SEVENTH OF MAY, 1845.

BOSTON:
SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS.
1845.

I. R. BUTTS, PRINTER,
No. 2 School Street.

REPORT.

It is now seventeen years since this Society was organized; and it is a source of satisfaction to believe that it has more than answered the expectations of its early friends. As its benevolent and Christian labors have been prolonged, new means of usefulness have developed themselves, and that which was commenced as a bond of sympathy among a few, has extended itself until its friendly influences are felt among the most distant churches of our faith.

We would acknowledge with devout gratitude that kind Providence which, from the beginning, has smiled upon us, and crowned our labors with no small degree of success.

Since the last Annual Report letters have been received from various parts of Europe and the United States, giving evidence of deep interest in the Religious Education of the young. In the numerous churches, (both here and abroad,) many earnest and benevolent minds, with enlarged views and a holy zeal, are striving to attain newer methods of instruction, and to diffuse a deeper religious spirit among those who instruct.

The letters which have been received have presented fewer statistics, and more of a living devotion; meagre statements of numbers have given way to an earnest spirit of inquiry concerning the vital questions connected with spiritual culture. A sense of the solemn responsibility resting upon Teachers seems to have taken posses-

sion of the soul. An unwillingness to trifle with a sublime trust, and a desire to act in harmony with the wisdom of God, has sprung up with new power in the Churches.

We say there is such a spirit — but we do not say that such a spirit is universal. Some Schools and Churches have a larger share of earnestness than others. Some are conscious of their need of something better. They ask for wisdom and they pray for zeal. "Urge upon us (more than one correspondent has written) urge upon us those ever true and important considerations which may excite in us more and more ardor in our duties; point out such subjects, and suggest such topics, as may instruct as well as admonish us."

This is the spirit which prevails, and we feel that it is the guarantee of progress. It contains within itself the seminal principles of growth.

Among the letters which have been received some have given an account of numbers, and others have given in detail their methods of instruction. Some have dwelt upon general propositions, and others have expressed particular wants. It is not our purpose to go over this ground in our present report, but rather to make these communications the basis of certain views, connected with them, and growing out of them, collectively considered.

In the country it has generally been the custom to discontinue the School through the winter, on account of the difficulty of collecting the younger scholars in the cold season. But in some towns the Schools have been continued through the last season with unexpected success, and there is a growing conviction that the organization of the classes should never be wholly given up. In several places, where the youngest pupils have been unable to attend, adult classes have been formed, and these Bible Classes have found the winter months peculiarly favorable for their purposes. In Northborough, and Lancaster, and Sterling, and other towns, this course has been followed with great success. We would urge upon all Schools the importance of continuing the School

through as long a season as possible, and never to discontinue it, unless it should be a matter of necessity. Especially would we urge the formation of Bible Classes, where those of all ages, even up to the most advanced years, may be welcomed as students of the Holy Scriptures. No scene can be more encouraging in the Christian Church, than to witness old and young engaging, in the spirit of earnest inquiry, in the study of the divine word.

Some correspondents speak with great force upon parental neglect, and the necessity of taking efficient measures to arouse them from their indifference, to a sense of their own responsibility, and the need of their hearty co-operation.

Our respected brother in Rochester writes — It is obvious that one chief drawback from Sunday School efficiency, is the indifference and neglect of parents. My proposition is that *fifty dollars* be offered for the best, and *twenty* for the second best, addresses to parents on their religious obligations to their children, and their duties and relations to the Sunday School. Should this be adopted, I would gladly contribute the price of one or two life-memberships to the object; and perhaps it may call more attention to the matter, when I state that the idea has been present with me for years; and that all my experience proves to me that such an appeal, if powerfully made, and properly circulated by Pastors and Sunday School Superintendents, would work a glorious result, cheering the desponding, giving new courage to those who have accomplished something, and making the Sunday School, what it claims to be, the highest charity and the richest discovery of the nineteenth century.

The Sunday School Society have this suggestion under consideration. In the mean time they would say — much may be done by the living voice. Let pastors speak upon this subject both in private and public. Let it be the theme of deliberate argument and of earnest appeal in the pulpit. If the influence of the clergy should be powerfully turned in this direction, it could not

be without a salutary result. "*Show piety at home,*" *is a text for the age.*

In regard to the general statement of numbers we will only say that they will compare well with any previous year. We believe there never was at any former period a larger number of pupils, or a more devoted body of teachers, than are at this moment connected with our Churches.

Some express the want of a more perfect manual: and some dwell upon the advantages of a more systematic course of instruction. A number of schools have adopted, with apparent success, the plan of one lesson for the whole school, leaving each Teacher to adapt the subject to their own pupils. With one subject, — the prayer, the hymn, the general lesson, may be in harmony with what is taught in each class. The Teachers' meetings may also be made interesting and particularly useful, by taking up the subjects which are to be the topic of remark through the whole school.*

* The following statement, selected from our foreign correspondence, is extracted from a letter by Miss Carpenter, of Bristol, and gives us an interesting account from our friends in that city, whose devotion to every good work is worthy of universal emulation.

"It is pleasant to learn that you are pursuing the same plan with ourselves in Sunday School Instruction. We have now adopted it for about four months, and we have reason to hope that it will not only greatly benefit the children, but lead the Teachers to a more careful and connected study of the Gospel History. The first half hour of the School is employed, by the Superintendent's reading a short portion of the Harmony, with comments on it and reference to maps. Each Teacher then reads again the same passage with her class, impressing on their minds the explanations given. As occasions present themselves, the children have presented to them objects illustrating the history and drawings of the places alluded to. At the end of each period, the whole school is examined, and the children are generally found to be not only very well acquainted with the Gospel narrative, but understand the plan of a Harmony of the Gospels, and have a clear idea of the situation of the places in the map, with the various illustrations that have been given. Livermore's Commentary on the Gospels, which has been republished by the Belfast Sunday School Association, is very valuable to us. Our Teachers by this plan are led to feel more strongly the importance of preparing themselves. We are preparing large colored drawings of the Holy Land from Finden, Bartlett & Robert's splen-

Without dwelling upon this, it may be said: that at times a change in the method of instruction may be useful, and that a wise pastor or superintendent may devise a course which shall occupy several months in the school to the advantage of all. Such a course will break in upon any dull formality, and give perhaps (if judiciously pursued) a freshness to the instruction. It may also impart a new impulse to the meetings, and serve to attract to these meetings larger numbers.

But there is a topic of deeper interest, which has been brought before this society. In our various visits to schools and churches at a distance, in our communications from abroad, and in the union meetings held monthly in this city, by Teachers of the various schools, we are satisfied that there is a growing conviction upon some subjects vitally connected with the usefulness of this institution, and the highest interests of Christianity.

What shall be taught? is the question every where asked. The Sunday School is beginning to exert an influence only second to the Christian pulpit. The Sunday School makes the first, and therefore the most lasting impression.

Secular education in our Common Schools, does much to effect the future well-being of the child, but the whole purpose of the Sunday School, working under the sanction of religion, touching the most sacred springs of life, and having reference to eternity, must be considered as producing results far more deeply involving the welfare of the soul and of society. That which is taught, must be connected with momentous results. What then is taught? The answer is, Christianity. These are *Sunday* Schools — *Christian* Schools. What *should be* taught but CHRISTIANITY?

But in these days the splendid phantom of imagination

did engravings. Scarcely any thing gives a greater reality to the facts of Scripture in the minds of children and even of grown persons, than seeing the spots where they occurred. I believe that many hold their faith in Christianity loosely, because they have not early learnt to realize the narrative to their own minds."

may be termed Christianity, while the actual documents of Christianity may be rejected. Christ may be believed in, it is said, while the events recorded as the leading, constant acts of his life are termed idle legends and fables; Christ may be believed in and taught, while the long series of benevolent and glorious manifestations of his power in healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, raising the dead, are declared untrue. No angel song was heard at his birth, no heavenly voice was heard at his baptism, no darkness appeared at the crucifixion. And when placed in the sepulchre, the body mouldered there, for there was no resurrection. He was really seen by no disciple after, — he never extended his hands to give a parting blessing while in the presence of disciples he ascended to heaven. All the leading and crowning events may be rejected, the authority denied, and yet Christ and Christianity be taught. What is taught then — and what is to be taught in our Sunday schools? Suppose forty or fifty Teachers in a Sunday School present the views of Christianity which has been stated. That the children of a parish, are told that Christ was a great genius and a remarkable Hebrew youth, sometimes in the right and sometimes in the wrong. That he was no doubt a beautiful specimen of humanity, but that the events as stated are really false and only to be considered myths. What is to be the result? Where will such instructions end? Are they to be taught in our schools? Some will say YES: let us have perfect LIBERTY. "I do not believe such views are true. I consider them both injurious and false; but I will have them in my pulpit and also in my school. Let Teachers come and impart these views to others; let the young become indoctrinated with them, for we advocate perfect LIBERTY!"

But others will say NO. Teach not this skepticism and denial to the children of the flock. Undermine not the faith which exists. Crush not the hope therewith connected.

It becomes a vital question WHAT IS TO BE TAUGHT; and as far as can be gathered from our correspondence with Sunday Schools at a distance, — as far as we know

of Sunday Schools around us, — as far as the officers of this society have borne testimony, *there is but one voice.* Teach *the Gospel.* Teach *Christ as the Evangelists taught him.* Teach Jesus; — in his life, in his perfect example, his purity, his devotion, his love. Teach Jesus; — in his precepts and his doctrine. Teach Jesus, from his birth to his ascension. With the glorious manifestations of his miraculous power, and the wondrous force of his divine truth.

The New Testament is the text-book of the Sunday School; the basis of its instructions; the treasure house of its power.

The Sunday School Teacher then, should have faith in the truth of the Record. A Christ without the miracles is not the Christ of the Gospel. Whether God could have given a revelation without miracles is one thing, and whether the revelation by Jesus was without miracles is quite another. Christ with the miracles being the Christ of the New Testament, Christ with the miracles we consider the Christ for the Church and the Sunday School.

How can we speak to children upon that touching sentence, "Father, forgive them," as being ever uttered, if we also say, the rocks were not rent or the heaven darkened. If the one is false, why not the other? It does not meet the question to answer, "it is a small matter whether rocks were rent." The fact is, we have the same authority for believing in the one that we have for believing in the other. And by what authority can we deny the one and hold to the other? We might take up every spiritual truth uttered during the ministry of Christ, and particularly all uttered in connection with miracles, in the same way. The doubt that is thrown *over one*, is thrown over all. The denial that sweeps one, sweeps the whole.

The Sunday School Teacher, then, should have faith in the *Record:* — But there may be doubts and difficulties. Some may say, "Are we to have no thought on this subject? Are we to take all on trust, and follow blindly?" — We answer: Let there be thorough investigation. Let arguments he weighed, — let objections be considered, and let every evidence be fully studied and

sifted. Let faith be based upon absolute conviction, and conviction grow out of a clear understanding, and the understanding be enlightened by all the aids of knowledge.

But it may be said — all Teachers cannot, unaided, go through such an investigation. And here we would suggest, that, in addition to the aids of the large number of valuable works before the public, the Teacher should have the special aid of the pastor. We fear there has been too much laxity of opinion; that many have hardly been able to give an answer concerning the faith that is in them; that many are not so well informed upon these subjects as they would desire.

We suggest that every pastor should consider it one of his highest duties, and greatest privileges, to aid the Teachers of his school. That he should meet with them and assist them in obtaining clear and just views, opening in all its beauty the celestial splendor of God's revealed word; showing the adamantine foundations upon which it is based, and the harmonious proportions of its perfect whole.

But, after all, it may be said — "this is mere HISTORICAL *Christianity*, a dwelling upon the letter: is not God a *present God*, and is not religion a spiritual life?" We answer, *yes*. And the Teacher should teach the doctrine of *a present God* and *spiritual life* as taught by Jesus. The Teacher should not rest satisfied in dwelling *upon the letter*, but should drink deeply of the spirit of the Divine Messenger. Heaven and earth are open to him as well as to another; the grandeur of the sea, the serene beauty of the stars he beholds. Prayer too is for him, and God will pour wisdom into *his* soul, as well as into the soul of another. A living piety is for him; he is to be actuated by pure motives and to cherish the highest principles of a holy life. We say, then, there should be among Sunday School Teachers, *faith in the record*, and a *participation in the* SPIRIT.

Let these two things exist, and the Sunday School will become one of the most useful institutions in the world. In proportion as these exist, in that proportion the School will be useful.

The following is the Report of the Sunday School Society's Agency for the past year, as communicated by Mr. Pray, their chairman. The agency through the past year has been conducted on the same general principles as in former years. Its agents, eight in number, have held themselves in readiness to visit and labor, wherever they might at any time, be called; and no amount of time, ability or means within their command, which they have had an opportunity to give, has been withheld in aid of the interesting and important work in which they are engaged.

By their several agents they have been enabled to visit during the year, one hundred and nine schools; of which seventy-seven were in the State of Massachusetts; twelve in the State of Maine; five in the State of New Hampshire; one in the State of Vermont; two in the State of Connecticut; six in the State of New York; one in the District of Columbia; one in the State of Kentucky; two in the State of Illinois; one in the State of Missouri; one in Montreal.

The number of Teachers in these Schools, was	2,123
The number of Pupils, - - - -	12,629
The number of Persons addressed, children and adults, - - - - - - -	17,576
The number of Addresses, 88, and Sermons, 2,	90
The number of miles travelled, - - -	3,390
The expense of travelling, - - - -	$49 20
The expense of printing, - - - -	$42 82

A large proportion of these visits were made on the Sabbath day when the Schools were in ordinary session; others were made at their opening or closing in the spring or fall; others again, on anniversary, fast day, or other public occasions or celebrations. During the year they have met three Sunday School Associations, embracing a large number of schools each, at their public Semi-Annual Meetings, some at a distance of seventy or one hundred miles from the city.

It is due to George G. Channing, Esq., to state that he, having been appointed one of our agents, availed himself of his visits to various societies in this and other states in the discharge of his missionary duties, to visit

and address their Sunday Schools. By this means he has obtained for the Society, statistical returns from fifty-seven schools, containing nine hundred and sixty-eight Teachers, and five thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight pupils; — and of these schools he was enabled to address twenty-three.

We ought also to state, that some of the more distant places and schools mentioned in this Report, were visited by another of their agents, Rev. F. T. Gray, during the last summer, while on a missionary tour to the West. The amount of the travel of neither of these is included in the previous table. The remainder of the visits were made as follows: — Rev. Mr. Waterston, six; Rev. Mr. Muzzey, two; Rev. C. Brooks, one; Mr. Pray, eighteen; Mr. Bangs, nine; Mr. Thayer, eight; Mr. Bayley, five.

The Agency has published during the year one new Tract, entitled "My Early Home," the edition of which was six thousand. Having received a donation from an unknown friend, of $25, for the publication of a tract whose distribution should be among the more distant Schools connected with our denomination, they have executed the wishes of the donor, in part, by the distribution of two thousand copies of this tract to the schools thus designated; and will complete their obligation in full on the publication of their next tract.

During the year, they have distributed of their several tracts nearly 9,000 copies, — or about 150,000 pages, being an increase over the past year of 35,000 pages.

Of the Society's Annual Report, 2,000 copies were printed, and distributed, in smaller or larger numbers, to every Church and School connected with the denomination. The meetings of the Teachers' Social Union, in the city, have been continued monthly, through the year; they have had before them for consideration and discussion some of the most important and interesting questions touching the duties, responsibilities, encouragements, and hopes of the Sunday School Teacher; and a warm and increasing interest has been manifested to the present time. Fourteen Schools were represented at the last meeting; and more than 200 Teachers were present.

The following persons have been made Life Members

in the course of the year, namely: — Lewis G. Pray, Superintendent of the Twelfth Congregational Sunday School, in Boston; Rev. Nathaniel Whitman, East Bridgewater; Rev. E. H. Sears, Lancaster; Rev. A. A. Livermore, Keene, N. H.; Rev. F. A. Whitney, Brighton; and Rev. W. P. Lunt and lady of Quincy. Contributions have been made to the funds of the agency by the Schools at Walpole, Barre, and Petersham, Mass., and by one, (Rev. Mr. Lord's) in Portsmouth, N. H.

Before closing, the Society would make one suggestion which we hope will be acted upon; it is that a convention should be called of such Pastors and Teachers as are interested in the religious education of the young. Interesting meetings have frequently been held by various city and county associations. Why might we not now have a State Convention, at Salem, or Boston, or Worcester. For five years our Legislature provided that there should be a Common School Convention held in each county of the Commonwealth, at which the Secretary of the Board of Education was present, and gave an able Lecture upon the most approved and successful methods of arranging studies and the general principles upon which all education should rest. Why might we not have, upon the transcendently important topic which would bring us together, lectures from the ablest and most experienced minds, followed by free discussions, which should kindle with new fervor the souls of all; which would open clear and profound views of the wisest methods of action; which would tend to perfect our present plans; to give our hearts a fresh impulse, and renovate our faith, calling before us the beautiful characteristics of childhood; the adaptation of Gospel truth to its highest wants, and presenting in its fulness the grand idea of the universal religious education of society.

In conclusion we would express our gratitude to that Being who has hitherto smiled upon our efforts. Without His blessing no work can prosper; while with it, none can fail of ultimate success.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

R. C. WATERSTON.

ANNIVERSARY

OF

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Seventeenth public Annual Meeting of this Society took place on Wednesday evening, May 28th, at Rev. Dr. Gannett's Church, Federal Street. The house was early and fully thronged. The services were commenced by a Voluntary on the new and superb Organ, recently built for the Federal Street Society, followed by a Chant from a select choir of about fifty children. The Throne of Grace was devoutly and appropriately addressed by Rev. C. Palfrey, of Barnstable. This was succeeded by a Hymn sung by the choir of children, to the tune of the "*Call of the Bell.*" The Annual Report, given in the preceding pages, was then read by the Corresponding Secretary, Rev. R. C. Waterston, which carried with it, by its adaptedness to the times, and the force and clearness of its arguments, the entire sympathies of the large audience present. Then ascended from the sweet voices of the youthful choir another beautiful Hymn; after which the Hon. S. C. Phillips, the President of the Society in the chair, having called for remarks, Rev. Charles Brooks, of this city, rose and addressed the meeting as follows:

Mr. President:

Before proceeding to the Addresses, I ask permission, as one of the Agents of the Sunday School Society, to state, that at the last Annual Meeting for the choice of officers, there was an animated and interesting discussion respecting the best modes

of increasing the value of our Sunday Schools, and also respecting a closer concert of action among the scattered numbers of our great fraternity. The result, with entire unanimity, was this; that the Agents propose, in addition to their usual labors, to hold Conventions of Sunday School Teachers throughout the Unitarian denomination, whenever and wherever they can. They propose in these Conventions not to interfere with the particular rules or rights of any School, but merely to gather and spread information, to warm and be warmed, to pray and speak and labor. They wish to look straight into the pupil of their brother's eye, and hold their finger on his pulse. Society *begins* to feel the force of the fact, that if we would have healthy and fruit-bearing trees, *we must pay particular attention to the young shoots.* If the Primary School be a wise institution for the republic, the Sunday School is *as* wise a one for the Church. We have not done half enough for our Sabbath Schools; they are Heaven's primary schools, the Church's nursery, and the hope of our denomination. The Agents therefore look for all sorts of good results as respects topics of instruction, modes of teaching, qualifications of teachers, Sunday School manuals, libraries and teachers' meetings; and I am commissioned now to invite all the Unitarian clergy, Sunday School Teachers, and the friends of this Gospel cause, to gather Conventions in their respective neighborhoods, at such times as may seem most opportune, that we may thereby strengthen each other's hands and encourage each other's hearts, in the high and holy office of feeding the lambs of the Savior's flock.

Rev. F. T. Gray having been alluded to in the Report as one of the Agents who had visited the Schools and Churches in the West during the past year, followed, and spoke in substance as follows:

Mr. President: — I should not venture to occupy any of the precious moments of this evening by any words of mine, were it not, that as my name is referred to in the Report, a sense of duty compels me to bear testimony, cheerful testimony, to the fidelity and interest of those of our friends at the West, whose flocks it was my pleasure the last summer to meet and address, as an agent of this Society. It was delightful to witness the deep interest that was manifested and felt by all the Pastors of Unitarian Societies in the West, in the education of the young, and especially in their Sunday Schools.

At Louisville, I had the pleasure of addressing two Sunday Schools, in both of which, the members of Rev. Mr. Heywood's

Society are deeply interested, — in one, as their Parish School, and the other, as connected with the Ministry at Large, which they sustain in that city. Both were in a very prosperous and satisfactory condition. At St. Louis also, there were two Schools, of which, like those at Louisville, one was connected with the Society, and the other was a mixed School, composed of children of the poor, gathered by the benevolent members of that Society, and instructed from the Word of Life on the afternoon of every Sabbath. At Quincy, Illinois, I also addressed a small School, connected with the Rev. Mr. Moore's Society. I was particularly pleased with the marked interest with which the children looked to this kind Pastor, as their true friend, and the absorbing attention they manifested in his instructions in the services of the School. The scene presented on the morning I was privileged in being with them will never be forgotten. At Geneva, I addressed the children connected with the Rev. Mr. Conant's Society, a small, but exceedingly interesting School. At Rochester, N. Y., I had also the pleasure of visiting another of our Schools, the one connected with the Rev. Mr. Holland's Society, a School of great promise, and in which this Pastor is earnestly engaged.

In each of these places, and also in Cincinnati, I was peculiarly gratified in perceiving the deep interest our Ministers took in the general subject of the education of the young, and the great influence they were exerting throughout their various communities by their active efforts and labors in this holy cause.

It has been frequently remarked, that when our young men leave New England, they lose their interest in religion and religious institutions. This is but too true with regard to many. But nothing has impressed my own mind more deeply with the value and importance of Sunday Schools, than by having seen those who had engaged in Sunday Schools while here, on going to the West renewing their connexion with these institutions, longing for the aid of their former friends, giving them, with grateful hearts, when opportunity offered, a cordial welcome; and while the young were thus educated, they, by a silent influence, were improving the morals and increasing the happiness of the community.

Let Pastors then, in New England, watch over these nurseries of the Church, and see that every young person in their societies receive the advantages and blessings of this noble and sacred institution. They know not where the lot of their little ones may be cast in future life; but if their hearts have been touched and their minds impressed in the Sunday School, go where they may, they will be ready gladly to meet the call that will be made upon them to engage in every good work, unfold their napkin,

and impart of that rich treasure which they have received, which will gladden many hearts, and prove a blessing to many schools. It is in this way, that morality and religion are to keep pace with the growth of that vast section of our country, and that the young, as they leave us, are to be saved from a total absorption in this world's affairs, and from that career of vice and sin. which, sad to say, has marked the course of far too many in all our eastern as well as western cities.

After which, in order to relieve the attention of the audience for a few moments, the choir sang another hymn.

Mr. A. B. FULLER, late of Belvidere, Ill., then addressed the meeting as follows:

It is with mingled emotions of pleasure and sadness that I listen to the cheering words of those who are here gathered, and contemplate the large assemblage which evidences growing interest in those who most demand our care, the youth of the land. The joy which I feel arises from warm sympathy in the prosperity of your Sunday Schools; my sadness from the thought of the destitution of those children in the West, for whom my sympathies are specially enlisted.

As I think of the religious privileges enjoyed by those connected with New England Societies, the great law of association by contrast, suggests to my mind the spiritual privations endured by western children, and a picture of the log-cabin where so oft my Sunday School has been gathered, rises unbidden before the mental vision. My thoughts travel rapidly over many a weary mile, and dwell upon those scenes amid which these last two years have been passed, and this evening more than ever, am I keenly alive to the wants of those for whose benefit this society was established.

In many a prairie settlement, neither a Sabbath nor week-day School is provided to meet the spiritual and intellectual wants of those who are allowed to grow up neglected and ignorant. Either from too much poverty or too much indifference, the state of religious and intellectual culture is so deplorable among many of the youth in distant settlements as to demand our fervent prayers and liberal assistance. It is true that in most large villages, Sunday Schools have been formed, but these comprise within their limits by no means the majority of the children. A voice from the distant neighborhoods, the scattered hamlets, calls aloud for aid, demanding, if not missionaries, who shall give living utterance to soul-moving truths,

that at least we should send books and the publications of this society to preach by the fire-side and give instruction amid the prairie solitude. The sons and daughters of those who have left our loved New England are among those who sigh for the quiet vestry where upon Sunday they could listen to the mild persuasive words which taught the way of duty and of life, and while the gloss of novelty, the stern requirements of business, or a sense of freedem teaches parents to endure much with fortitude in the hope of providing for their household, yet nought can atone for the loss of *religious* privileges. They may brave peril and scorn hardship. Willingly does the father and the tenderly nurtured mother resign the luxuries and many of the comforts of former years, but the thought that those, whom they prize more than existence, for whose temporal welfare they have left the scenes of happy days, must never know the advantages of good Sunday Schools, is sometimes a sad trial for a parent's heart.

From a long acquaintance with western people, I am prepared to assert that the deficiency of good instruction is not wholly the result of indifference, but of the want of means. Enterprising, and endowed with no common share of perseverance, the hardy pioneers have left their homes, the better to provide for their little ones; and indifference to the welfare of those for whom they have endured so much privation, would surely be a strange accusation.

I know of no way in which this Society could better subserve its purposes than by sending an agent to visit our western Churches, address the Schools already formed, aid the establishment of others, and in addition to this duty, to scatter broadcast those messengers of love and mercy, — your tracts.

The visit to the West of Rev. F. T. Gray, from this city, during the past year, has been of inestimable value, and the words of kind sympathy which he has spoken have cheered many a heart, and inspired to redoubled effort.

In a box which I received from New England during my residence in Illinois, I found a small package of Sunday School tracts. I would that it were possible for me to describe the joy which they diffused among the children of a Sunday School which a sense of duty had prompted me to form; but the glistening eye, the joyous smile, the quick bounding step with which each child hastened home with his treasure, defy description.

Upon visiting Nauvoo, (Ill.) I found that there existed in that place a *Mormon Sunday School* containing *two thousand* children. This number will not seem so large when it is recollected that Nauvoo is a densely populated city, and has only

one school of that nature; yet can aught be more melancholy than the thought that so many immortal spirits must be trammelled with the fantastic, yet galling fetters of this mad delusion. When we reflect upon the inroads which this iniquitous superstition has made upon the faith of multitudes, can we excuse ourselves from our mission of training up the young in the faith produced by a calm, pure and rational system of doctrines.

Let us then arouse to renewed and hopeful effort, we have the vantage ground which those teaching innate and total depravity can never gain. We, as a denomination, can reach the soul and win to Christ those little ones whom he took to his arms with earnest blessing. And when we do this, we shall have accomplished the God-given work, by the establishment of Christ's kingdom, and gathering to his fold those of whom he spoke, when he declared, "of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

Rev. Mr. Whitman, of Portland, Maine, followed and said:

Mr. President: — Every gathering of children to receive the instructions and enjoy the privileges of the Sunday School, and every assembly called together, like the present, for the purpose of advancing the interests of the Sunday School, reminds me of what I have been accustomed to regard as one of the most striking and beautiful features of the Gospel. I allude to the deep interest which the Gospel, as exhibited in the life and conduct of its founder, manifests in children. It is recorded of the Saviour that he took little children in his arms and blessed them, and said, forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. How strikingly peculiar was this act! how very different from the philosophers and sages, who had previously undertaken to reform the world. The history of Paganism speaks of the exposure of infants, when feeble and diseased, to be destroyed by wild beasts or to perish with hunger. And why is this? Because Paganism regards man chiefly as a being of earth, and looks principally at the beauty and strength of the body; and where there is no promise of these, the helpless breathing thing is cast away as utterly worthless. But Christ regarded man as destined to an immortal life beyond the grave, and directed his attention principally to the spiritual nature. He saw in that the elements of the man, the elements of the higher spiritual life, and therefore he looked with yearning fondness upon children, as spiritual beings, capable of being elevated, through the power of gospel truth and the influ-

ences of God's grace, to angelic glory and heavenly happiness. In the light of the Gospel, we may all look upon children as spiritual beings, created, not merely for this life, but for a never ending existence beyond the grave, beings capable of spiritual improvement, exposed to the danger of sinful pollution. The parent may look, with fond affection, upon the child that is diseased or deformed, as still possessed of a spiritual nature, which, if trained aright, may be marked with purity and goodness, may contribute to the happiness of all with whom it may associate, and may be fitted for mansions of heavenly blessedness. It is because Christians have, in some degree, imbibed the spirit of Christ; that they have gone out to gather up the lambs of the flock, that they might feed them with the bread of life. And the more entirely the Christian church shall become imbued with the true spirit of the Gospel, the more deeply and extensively will be felt the importance of encircling the young in the arms of Christian affection, and of imparting to them spiritual nourishment.

But I have long felt that our Sunday Schools were not accomplishing all that they ought to accomplish, because the instruction given in them is too desultory and too indefinite, not aiming at a sufficiently distinct object, not pursuing a sufficiently systematic course. As you well know, Mr. President, in times past, and according to a theology which is now softening its features, children were regarded as wholly alienated from God and utterly incapable of being enlisted in his service and restored to his favor, except through the irresistible influences of the Spirit, in changing their natures. Under such a system of belief, religious instruction could have for its object only the inculcation of the dogmas of the creed, or the training the child to correct habits of mere outward morality, leaving his religious welfare to some future, and special, and irresistible influences of the spirit. It could not, in consistency with the doctrinal belief upon which it was based, seek to interest the affections of the child in spiritual things, and to lead it through the influence of these affections to consecrate itself to the service of God, in a life of obedience to the instructions of Christ. But the feelings, even of what is styled the Orthodox portion of the community, are undergoing a change upon this subject. Some of their prominent men and able writers are beginning to take the ground that religious education is to be regarded as the scriptural and divinely appointed mode of introducing the young into the Christian church. It is now thought that if parents and Teachers are faithful in the religious training of the young, and unite with their efforts fervent prayer to God for his blessing, the natural result will be, that, children so

trained, and so blessed, will, at a proper age, and in a quiet and rational way, be prompted by their feelings to connect themselves with the Christian church, without waiting for any after and special change; that the change experienced in becoming truly religious, will be the legitimate result of the very process of religious training through which they have passed. This view, or something very much like it, is, I say, beginning to find advocates among some prominent men belonging to orthodox denominations. I believe it to be the right view. It is one that I wish to have deeply impressed upon the minds of all parents and Sunday School teachers; so deeply impressed, that it may prompt to more faithful and persevering efforts for the accomplishment of the true end of religious education.

There is no reason, it would seem, why, if parents and Sunday School teachers are faithful and efficient in the work of religious education, our young men and young women should not be prompted by their own convictions and desires to enter the Christian church as early as they are expected to emerge from parental guidance and enter the world. But, if we would see this end accomplished, both parents and teachers should have a clear view of the object to be accomplished, and of the way in which they are themselves to labor for its accomplishment. They must feel that the object of religious education is not to give a few desultory hints upon the subject of religion, and awaken a little curiosity in regard to it, as preparatory to their becoming religious hereafter, but that it is to make them religious now, in their early years. They must feel, too, that in order to do this, they are to set before the young the character of God and of Christ, in their true light, in all their beauty and simplicity and loveliness; are to give to those committed to their charge clear views of the nature of religion; to show them what it is, and what it requires, and what they must be, in order to become truly religious; and are finally to give them such clear and explicit instructions upon the great truths of religion, as will furnish them with a distinct idea and a full understanding of the Christian system, that so they may be protected against being carried about by every wind of doctrine that may blow. This is, it is true, a great work. But it is the work which religious education, in the family and in the Sunday School, ought to aim to accomplish. Every Christian parent should seek to be able to say, with all good conscience, when his child leaves the parental roof to go forth to the cares and the trials of life, that child goes from me well instructed in the kingdom of heaven, in the doctrines and duties, the principles, motives and sanctions of the Gospel. And every Sunday School teacher should seek to be able to say the same of each

pupil that may go from his or her instruction in bidding adieu to the Sunday School. Could this be the case, then would the Sunday School become in reality, what it is sometimes called, the nursery of the church; then would Sunday School instruction become an efficient preparation for, and a valuable auxiliary to, the preaching of the Gospel. It has been said that the Sunday School is second only in importance to the pulpit. I know not but it might with truth be said, that in its own appropriate place and sphere, it is equal in importance with the pulpit. Both are important, both have their respective spheres of operation and influence, and neither can become a substitute for the other. The tendency has been to neglect the religious education of the young, in the expectation that the evils resulting from this neglect would be counteracted by the influence of the pulpit. As a friend of mine of another denomination once said in a letter upon this subject, "the Christian community have been laboring under a great error in this regard. They have left their children in the hands of the DEVIL, until they are well trained to his service, and then have set men to preaching to them to convert them to God."

The Juvenile Choir were then called upon by the President to sing another of the hymns on the order of performance, to the tune of "*In the Cottage*," which was executed with delightful effect.

The addresses were then resumed, and Rev. A. P. PEABODY, of Portsmouth, N. H., made in substance the following remarks:

I rise to second the remarks of my friend, Mr. Whitman, and to apply them to the qualifications of the Sunday School teacher. The rightful aim of the Sunday School is to make its pupils personally religious. Let it not be thought that there is any talismanic efficacy in a mere arrangement of classes, with one head taller than the rest in every group, and in the mechanical recitation of holy words. I can conceive of a perfectly organized and regularly conducted Sunday School, (and I fear that there are too many such,) where no possible result has been brought to pass, except the storing in the children's memories of good and wholesome words. Let it be constantly borne in mind, that it is not outward system, but the minds and hearts of the teachers, that make the School what it is. The aim, which the teacher should propose to himself with regard to any particular pupil, is to impress upon that child's mind a sense of the divine presence and love, to make his conscience quick and

tender, to hold up for his imitation his Savior's example, to point out the true path of duty, and to furnish him with availing motives to a virtuous and holy life. The lessons committed and recited I deem of great value, so long as they are not made to crowd other things out; for they give the pupil profitable employment at home, and they are a nucleus, around which the faithful teacher can group his own more personal instruction, and thus may the more surely avoid repeating himself, or dwelling disproportionately long on a single subject. But what the teacher should say to himself, is, "My place, my office, during the limited period for which this child is with me, is to do all that in me lies towards making him a sincere and devoted Christian."

In order to do this, it is an essential requisite, that the teacher be himself deeply interested in the momentous subjects on which he gives instruction. He should be a religious person, in his desires, aims and affections, — one who has his thoughts habitually fixed on things divine and eternal, who is no stranger to the exercises of devotion, whose life is governed by a pervading sense of duty and accountableness. I will not say that a teacher must needs be conscious of very high religious attainments. Of gospel truth, in all its forms of dispensation, there is but too much reason to confess, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." Too deeply conscious must the minister at the public altar be of his own frailties and infirmities, to demand perfection of those who discharge another department of religious ministry. Yet I would have them regard their office as a branch of the Christian ministry; and, if they would on no account ordain as their own religious teacher a man of known levity, worldliness or indifference to religion, however brilliant his powers or fascinating his speech, let them not suppose *themselves* in the *ministry to children* anything but mere cumberers of the ground, if they are not under the influence and guidance of serious thought and religious principle.

But if one is conscious that his face and steps are turned heavenward, and that he has begun to walk in his Savior's footsteps, let him not be deterred from undertaking this ministry by the consciousness of much in his heart and character that still needs and demands improvement. If, by diligent self-chastening, we are becoming acquainted with our own infirmities, this careful analysis of our own characters may enable us to apply the probe with searching power to other hearts, and to render them essential aid in the cure which we are seeking for ourselves. The school of Christ, in all its departments, is but a monitorial school, in which he, the all-perfect, is sole Master, while under him the more advanced pupils teach those in the

lower forms; and no one, who has actually entered as a pupil, should deem himself unfit to teach those, whose attainments are less than his own. But let none but pupils imagine that they can be fit teachers, — let none undertake to dispense the Gospel, except those, who habitually sit at the great Master's feet, and learn of him.

Nor let it be forgotten, in these days of frequent self-sufficiency and scepticism in religious matters, that we need teachers, whose piety is that of implicit faith and filial confidence, — who receive the Christ of God as divinely commissioned, endowed and empowered, and go to his infallible word, and not to their own dim intuitions and vague surmises, for their views of truth and duty. We want not that our children should grow up sceptics, or should be encouraged to lean upon their own understanding; and we must therefore seek only such teachers, as believe without doubt or gainsaying those records of our faith, which they are called upon to illustrate and enforce.

He was followed by Mr. W. R. Alger, of the Divinity School, Cambridge, who rose and said,

Those who have spoken here to-night having been for the most part from a distance, as one connected with the Sunday Schools of Boston, I would ask your attention for a few moments. I cannot cast my eyes over the scene now before me without the deepest emotion. It is, indeed, a grand sight to see the old and the young come crowding together for the prosecution of some one sublime and ennobling object. Such occasions, and the present is one of them, form the finest and pleasantest feature of our age. And no one, not even he who has grown old in the frequent enjoyment of such meetings, can contemplate the scene without feeling his nerves and his blood thrill — without feeling that it does his heart good. This crowded assembly of those who have come up here to move and to be moved with true thoughts and noble purposes, proclaims the depth of that interest in Sunday School instruction, which was never so strong and so general, as now. When we consider the prosperous condition and the flattering prospects of our Sunday Schools, we have indeed reason to thank God, and to take courage. Still, this interest is by no means felt by all. Perhaps not more than two-thirds of the children, in communities where there are Sunday Schools, attend them. Their parents do not send them. Considering the anxiety, they of course feel, for the welfare of their offspring, we can only account for this fact upon the supposition that they do not think

their children would be benefited by being placed under Sunday School instruction. In fact, a few days ago, I heard a gentleman give as a reason for not sending his children to the Sunday School, his belief, that as a general thing, they were not only not necessary, but not useful, and rather the contrary. Now I think a little reflection will show the correctness of a conclusion very different from this. The mind contains a union of three natures, a passional, an intellectual, and a moral nature. Evidently the *Passions* need not that any care should be taken for their cultivation or development. The beauties and deformities, the calms and storms of the world — the pleasures and pains, the ease and cares, the allurements, trials and difficulties of life, will amply suffice to do this. But the *Intellect*, does need this care for its enlightenment, strength, and guidance. And without efforts, well and perseveringly directed to this end, man passes through life a forceless idiot, or passes through life under the dominion of mere brutish propensions, and sinks into his grave at last, without having accomplished the destiny of a man. The civilized world respond to this fact, and we see the result all around us, in those colleges and academies and school-houses which are reared in our cities, which dot our villages, and which are the pride and boast of our land. And now how is it with the *Moral* nature? Does not this need culture and training? Can it be said that this part of our nature comes forth at once in full strength and maturity — as Minerva sprang from the bursting head of Jove? In reply to this, I point to the gradual and slow development of moral ideas in the child. And could it be shown, that the moral nature contained in itself, a germ of self-growing, self-developing power, which would gradually lead it to all moral truths, still might it not be hastened, assisted, strengthened, by attention and instruction? Observation will prove this true. It may be said, and it has been said, that men have natural *intuitions* of right and wrong in all cases, which are sufficient to guide them, and therefore no moral instruction is necessary, but rather stands in the way of this natural moral sense. In answer, I point to where morals and duties are not much taught, to where these natural intuitions have the freest and fullest play. And I say, as long as I see mothers *conscientiously* flinging their infants into the jaws of those devouring monsters which are glutted with human victims from the banks of the Ganges — as long as I see a nation of thieves stealing and cheating in all manner of ways without the least "*compunctious visitings of nature*" — as long as I see the poor Hindoo *conscientiously* casting himself beneath the crushing wheels of a revolting and hideous idol — as long as I see the deluded

devotee of Brahma *conscientiously* compelled to hold up his arm, till it is withered and stiffened, or to roll himself for hundreds of miles across deserts without once rising — and as long as I see children carrying their own parents, a gray-haired father, a worn out and dying mother, into the desert, and leaving them there to perish — alone, unwept, unpitied, — so long I must distrust the truth, or the power, or *both*, of men's natural intuitions of moral obligation and religious duty. Upon any ground that can be taken, therefore, it seems moral instruction should be given to children. Now will this be done by the parents themselves, at home? Certainly men are more accustomed, more willing, and therefore more able, to instruct each other and their children in the common branches of education in science, than in religion. Yet they rely upon this scarcely at all for the *former*, but almost universally send their children to the common schools. We infer that still less do they, or are they likely to do, the *latter*. Sunday Schools then are very necessary, very proper, and very useful. And will not those parents who have not been interested in them, and have not sent their children, listen to our plea, and do so now. The instructions they will receive there, will make them better children, and fit them to be better angels. The voices they hear and the hymns they sing there, will be music in their memory's ear until they die And the pleasant, purifying associations that cling about those hours spent there, will hang over them in hues of more than rainbow beauty, as their eyes look back upon them when long and wearisome years have sped.

I want to say a few words in relation to the nature of Sunday School instruction, which I will do as briefly as I can. It does seem to me very important that the *Doctrines of our Faith* should be taught in our schools. I would by no means have them taught exclusively or prominently, because, doctrines, in regard to which many differ, are certainly not so important, as those moral truths and duties, upon which all agree. Yet I would have them clearly taught to all who can understand them. I would have the doctrines of Unitarianism taught, because I believe them to be *true*, and therefore to exert a good influence upon the character and the life. Because when persons grow up, generally they must have religious doctrines of some kind, and it is therefore better that true ones should be instilled into their minds when young. And because their simplicity, and reasonableness, will be a guard against opposite doctrines which I regard as false in themselves, and in their influence, far as it goes, prejudicial to the moral and religious character. Yesterday many of us heard a venerable and a venerated man say, "in the words of the Roman Catholic poet," —

"For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

The idea the poet intends to convey is undoubtedly true, but the expression is too strong and has often been misunderstood. Is not his "life" *more likely* to be "in the right," whose "modes of faith" are right, than his whose "modes of faith" are wrong? The natural influence of truth, in a man's belief, is, to make him a good and true man. And I believe truth will justify the converse of the proposition. We cannot say then, "'t is no matter what a man believes, if he only acts right," for the difference between a correct and an erroneous faith, is just as wide as the gap between truth and error. And if we do really believe the doctrines of our faith to be true, we must esteem it a duty to teach them to our children. The importance of doctrinal teaching in Sunday Schools deserves a more thorough discussion, and I hope those who may speak after me will allude to it.

There is one other topic to which allusion was made in the Report, upon which I trust your patience will endure a few remarks. I mean, what should we teach of Christ? Views of the Saviour have been published in our community, which divest His character and life of every element of Divine authority, and every act of supernatural power. These views I conceive to have a very bad tendency. But the ground has been ably reviewed, and I will not presume to enter upon it now, save in its relation more especially to Sunday Schools. One notable fact strikes us in the outset. It is this. Before Christ came, the world looked *forward* for a great Teacher to come. It wanted an *Ideal* adequate to its imaginations and its capabilities. When he came this want was satisfied, and ever since, the world has looked *backward* for its great Pattern, to THAT LIFE which was lived eighteen hundred years ago among the mountains of Judea. And we now want, not an adequate *ideal*, but the *realization* of an ideal we already possess. These religious philosophers, in their haste to deny the miraculous, sometimes forget to be consistent, and seem to assume as great a miracle as any they deny. They admit Christ's unequalled and unrivalled supremacy over all other men. They admit that he "lived according to truth," and therefore "had nothing between himself and the Father," but "communed directly with God." They style him "the profoundest achievement of Humanity," and say, "He laid open the very heart of the world," "pierced to the central truths of the moral law," and strode thousands of years in advance of his race! Now if he had only the powers common

to men, *how* did he do this? In everything else — in war and in philosophy, in action and in thought — history shows us long lists of nearly equal men. And how happens it, I ask, that in theology and ethics, this Man attained a superiority to all others, so wonderful, and so unapproached? And this, too, when there have been thousands, who have striven night and day, by fasting and prayer, and with the concentrated energies of their whole souls, to be, in the sight of God, pure, true, perfect? It is a miracle in itself, and inexplicable, save on supernatural grounds. God's power assisted him.

We should not only teach Christ's character and life to children, because of their close connexion with the origin, the precepts, and the facts of Christianity, but also because a familiarity with the sublime beauty of the one, and the great perfection of the other, cannot but do them good. A moral power goes forth from them, which cannot but elevate and purify. Dr. Channing, whose eloquent teachings these walls yet remember well, says, in his Essay on the Writings of Milton — "The true test of genius is, that it call forth power in the souls of others. After converse with it, we feel an accession of intellectual strength." So is it with moral greatness. After communion with *goodness*, we feel that a "virtue has gone out from it," and we are better than before. Most pre-eminently is this the case with Christ. When I read his life, and behold him in the midst of his enemies, enduring meekly their mockery, insults, and buffetings, the first thought that comes to me is, that were I in such a situation, and possessed of his power, I should strike those malignant fiends at my feet, pale, quivering, blasted corpses. But as an eagle, beaten about in a tempest by wind and rain, when he catches a glimpse of the sun, soars upward and soon sails peacefully far above the clouds and the storm: so when I see Christ's magnanimous bearing and unchangeable love, my better nature rises *above* anger, hatred, and revenge, and I feel that I, too, could forgive my bitterest foe.

A glance at some of those qualities which are illustrated in the life of Jesus, will present the same idea more forcibly in another light. He was *firm*. He said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." He not only never yielded, but never bent in the severest storm of temptations that life, power, want and evil could bring on. He was *gentle*. He placed his hands on the heads of little children. He was *wise*. He confounded sages and philosophers — the critical Sadducee with his pomp of proud learning, and the Pharisaic scribe, acutely skilled in the law. He was *meek*. He said, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one." He was *benevolent*. "He went about

doing good." He made the sky blue, the earth fair, and the faces of friends pleasant, to those whose blind eyes had never seen, and he sent a world of music to ears that had never heard. He was *pious*. He spent whole nights alone upon the mountains in prayer to God, while about him the silent dews were falling, and above him the stars rolled in their old glory. He was *submissive*. He said, "Thy will, not mine, be done." The cup my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" He was *affectionate*. He held the "beloved disciple's" head upon his bosom. And over the grave of Lazarus, "Jesus wept;" so that hard-hearted Jews exclaimed, "Behold, how he loved!" He was *consistent*. He was the same when he sat upon Mount Tabor with impatient thousands beneath his glance, who at a single word from their supposed Messiah, would have flung the old Judean banner streaming to the winds, and with the irresistible power of a nation's enthusiasm, have borne him to the throne of the world's empire — the same when he rode over a pavement of men's garments upon out-stretched palms, with the "Hosannas" of an innumerable multitude thrilling along his path — the same then as when in the judicial hall of Pontius Pilate he endured the scoff, the spitting and the scourge, with that thorny crown upon his brow, whose tribute was bitter mockery, and whose jewelry was drops of blood. He was *forgiving*. Upon the cross, with his nailed hands, with his bleeding feet, and parched tongue, his prayer was, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Oh! that prayer, that dying prayer of Christ's! How many millions of hearts that ceased their weary beatings long ago, have throbbed faster, with higher and holier emotions as they have heard it! How many millions of eyes, closed now, have glistened with generous tears as they have read it! O! who can tell the influence that prayer has exerted upon the generations that have gone, and will upon the generations that are to come! Our Savior was firm yet gentle, wise yet meek, benevolent and pious, submissive, affectionate, consistent and forgiving. And what do we want more than these qualities? Oh! if we all had these qualities? Oh! if all had these qualities as *he* had them, what a change would come over the spirit of the world's dream! No longer would a slave hold up fettered hands clanking in the free sunlight of heaven. No longer would starvation, with her wan cheeks, her hollow eyes, her haggard brow, stretch out her thin withered hands, while bloated luxury sweeps by in her rustling silks and satins. No longer would poverty fall down in his rags and perish upon the very doors, within which gold and silver in sums untold and unused, are hoarded up. No longer would whole classes be doomed to wear them-

selves to the very bone for a scant subsistence, while all around them are thousands of nobility, who "wrap their silken limbs in sloth," and pass their lazy lives in pampered, bloated ease, from one year's end to another. War would not trample upon the nations any more, but in the mild light of international peace, *humanity* might rest, from her long toils and her fearful struggles, peacefully rest at last. The banners of every land wherever their folds were unfurled to the breeze, would still whip the winds of freedom. Envy, hatred, selfishness and oppression, would vanish from among men. A tide of harmony would roll its happy waves around the earth, and from all its old storm-smitten hills, and its battle-scathed plains, there would rise one general anthem of "Glory to God on high, and on earth peace, and good will towards men."

He was succeeded by Rev. Dr. DEWEY, of New York, who expressed himself in the following words:

MR. PRESIDENT: — I am sensible that the hour waxes late, and instead of detaining you with a speech, I will relate an anecdote, which has been suggested to me by the scene around us, and the music of this children's choir which has just died away upon our ears. It happened, during the visit of the allied sovereigns to London after the battle of Waterloo, that there was a Sunday School celebration in the Cathedral of St. Paul's, at which these distinguished persons attended. It was indeed no ordinary occasion, and it required no royal presence to make it interesting, and even sublime. The voices of eight thousand children mingled in a solemn and majestic chorus of praise to heaven. I have seen the grandeur of cathedral worship; I have seen clouds of incense rising from altars of richest marble and gold; but to my thought, no worship ever ascended to Cathedral dome so touching and overwhelming as the swelling majesty of those eight thousand infant voices, offering praise to their Creator. Think from whence that incense came, and how it was prepared. It was not manufactured at small cost, like that which is flung from golden censers. It came from the cares and labors, it was breathed from the affections and prayers, of many faithful and devoted hearts. It may be well believed, that to the spectators this grand celebration of which I speak was a moving spectacle. A gentleman from New York, who was present, says that the Emperor Alexander burst into tears, went down from his seat, and took the children in his arms, and embraced them. Yes, he who had witnessed without a tear, perhaps, the destruction of his ancient city of Moscow, he who held his heart firm when at the battle of Bo-

rodino the smoke of a thousand cannon darkened the light of day, and "the sabres of forty thousand dragoons clashed in the horrid gloom," was melted into awe and tenderness before these crowding ranks of simple children, singing "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men." And well might imperial majesty bend and lean to that touching and lovely spectacle. What do I say? He, in whose presence all the majesty of earth sinks to the dust, took little children in his arms and blessed them!

Let me add another remark, sir, suggested to me by the place where we are assembled.* If there are any words that oftenest recur to me from the conversations of the past, they are those which fell from the lips whose hallowed accents have often filled this holy sanctuary. I remember at a time when his name as a writer was beginning to be widely known, that he one day said to me, "I have undertaken to instruct a class of young people whom I receive at my house. For I fear that the effect of all preaching, of all writing, is vague and general; and that if I would leave the impress of my thoughts anywhere, it must be upon a few minds, taught in this familiar way." Yes, sir; at the time when the fame of Channing was spreading through the world, he turned to this humble sphere of instruction as that in which he could leave the deepest and most lasting record of himself. And I believe it is true, that amidst all the glory of authorship and eloquence, nowhere can any man make a mark so enduring, as in the reiterated and familiar instruction of childhood and youth.

The President, Hon. S. C. Phillips, closed the meeting by pronouncing an affectionate and eloquent tribute to the character and memory of the late Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, which, up to the last moment of publication, we had hoped, but in vain, to have procured. Having taken no notes, we only remember that he spoke in particular of the relation in which Mr. S. had stood to the Sunday School, over one of which, in Salem, he had been for many years Superintendent; and of his expressed intention, if Providence had permitted, to have been present on this occasion, to have borne public testimony to the value of the institution. Mr. P. described, in a touching manner, his last interview and conversation with him

* The Church of the late Dr. Channing.

a short time before his decease, when, in substance, Mr. S. said, that at that solemn hour, when time and all the interests of the present world were so rapidly passing away, all the honors and distinctions of life, all the pageantries of official station, and the professional success which had attended him, were as nothing in comparison with the reflections which arose to sustain and comfort him, growing out of his connexion with the Sunday School, and the hope, that in this humble, but truly exalted sphere of action, he had been useful to the rising generation, and had done something for the cause of humanity and religion.

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THE

EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH THE

ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-SEVENTH OF MAY, 1846.

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SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS.

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PREFACE.

The publication of the following Report has been unexpectedly delayed, but it is believed that the views offered in the various communications it contains will give it an unusual value. Many of these communications have been received from persons whose experience and character give them great weight. Some of the extracts are from papers sent to the President of the Society, with reference to a Convention of Teachers held in Salem, and are worthy of great consideration. Many of the views here given are offered quite as much to induce reflection, as with the expectation that they will throw immediate light upon the subjects to which they refer. Reports like this are, perhaps, often thrown aside without being read; or they are perused carelessly, and are but little thought of. We would suggest that Teachers and Superintendents should read the following pages with care, and make a memorandum of such points as may seem important, or such questions as may arise, and that these topics and questions be brought before the Teachers' Meetings for discussion. It is believed that such a course would give an additional interest to the meetings, and might be the means of promulgating views which would be in the highest degree beneficial.

Boston, July 20th, 1846.

REPORT.

On this our eighteenth anniversary, it is a satisfaction to feel that, as successive years have been added to the past, this Society has not existed wholly in vain, but has exerted, through an extended circle, a salutary influence; and that while many changes have taken place, this Society still continues as an active instrumentality for diffusing good.

Before proceeding to topics connected with the condition of our schools, we would allude to the expressions of regard and affection which have been extended to us from abroad. Letters have not unfrequently been received from different portions of this country, as well as from England and Ireland, expressing gratitude for useful suggestions, with expressions of Christian sympathy and the warmest wishes for our continued success.

In addition to these more general expressions, we would take particular notice of an address which has been received from a meeting of the Manchester District Sunday School Association, held lately in England, which calls our attention, in a friendly and earnest manner, to the important subject of Peace, and urges upon teachers in this country to instil into the youthful mind, a horror of war and all its accompaniments; to teach the young to look beneath the glittering exterior of the soldier's profession, and the dazzling parade of military glory, and to train them to look upon the inhabitants of all

countries as brothers; to reverence the claims of humanity, the sacredness of life, and the great principles of that Gospel which teaches that it is better to suffer than to inflict injury, to die than to kill.

To this message we heartily respond. For eighteen hundred years has the religion of Jesus been in the world, and yet to this day the voice of war is heard. Nay, not only this, but within the circle of Christendom, and even among professing Christians, there is a love of military glory. What is falsely called honor and patriotism takes possession of the soul and expels the mild, loving, forgiving spirit of Jesus. Those who have called themselves the followers of the Son of God, so far from seeking to extirpate war, with all its fearful calamities, have thrown over it their sanction, and have too often sought to place upon it the seal of the Cross.

With the views of the teachers of England who have sent this address, we deeply sympathise, and we pray that the time may speedily come when nations shall learn war no more; when enlightened and Christian people may find wiser methods of settling their difficulties, than by the sacrifice of human life; and when the heavenly principles of forbearance and forgiveness may be more widely recognized and more faithfully practised.

Amid the multiplied evils which are around us, and which at times sadden the mind, we turn with renewed hope to the institutions of Religion. When salvation comes, it will be from the Gospel of Jesus, and all reasonable expectations of general good must be based upon the more extended influence of Christian principles. With these feelings, we turn to the Sunday School, and know that here, if we sow the seeds of righteousness, we may expect, before many years, an abundant harvest.

And while we are thus prompted to hope, we pause to ask if our hope is well grounded; and, in answering this, we can-

not but allow that the consequences which will follow from the moral and religious instruction of the young, must depend upon the character and fidelity of those who teach.

If the standard here is low, the good attained will be low in proportion. But if the simple and sublime principles of Christianity are promulgated with Christian fidelity, in that same proportion may we hope to see the happy effect of this, manifested in the character of those who are taught. The more pure the character of the teacher, and the more devoted his spirit, the greater will probably be his success in calling forth true excellence in others.

A question of the greatest importance then, is this: "Are Sunday schools doing the work which they should do?" We do not mean to ask whether they are doing what those who are unduly enthusiastic might desire. But in the eye of a sober judgment, are they doing what they might and what they ought to do?

And while we would desire neither to over-value nor under-value the labors of this institution; while we would speak with encouragement of the great good which has been accomplished; while we would never forget the self-sacrifice and devotion of many who are teachers; we may maintain that there is still room for progress, and that it is the proof of excellence to put forth new energies and seek yet higher attainments in the Christian course.

We say then that there is room for improvement; teachers and superintendents themselves feel it to be so; and where there is such a consciousness, and a determination to do whatever may be done, much may be expected.

Some speak of the teaching as too vague and indefinite, as being much less thorough than it should be. Some speak of the instructions as being too often of a character rather to please, than to impress, and as gratifying a momentary curiosity, rather than tending to implant great principles.

Some ask that the religion of Jesus should be more inculcated so as to become an indwelling principle. That the child should be more earnestly prepared for the future struggles and trials of life; that its spiritual nature should be awakened to a deeper and more abiding love of God; that there is too much mechanical instruction, and too little of that deep utterance of heart to heart, which comes from a sense of the true value of an immortal soul, and the dangers that threaten it in this world of probation.

Upon this important subject we have solicited the views of others who have much experience, and from our various correspondents we have received the following expressions:

The Hon. STEPHEN C. PHILLIPS, who, in addition to his many public labors, has for many years been the devoted superintendent of a Sunday school, writes as follows:

"You desire me to say something of THE QUALIFICATIONS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

"I begin by saying that a moderate share of intellectual power and acquirement may be sufficient for great usefulness, if combined with a large share of spiritual gifts and graces, and that such a combination is not impracticable or infrequent. The work of a Sunday school teacher, duly appreciated, allows scope enough for the most active and cultivated intellect; and he who, possessed of such a talent, is willing to employ it for a season or for life, in searching for truth, that he may impart it to others, as well as acquire it for himself, he who will give such a mind, *and a heart along with it*, to the study of God's word, and from Sunday to Sunday, will gather the young or the old around him, will find ample employment for all his powers, and will never fail to thank God that he has been led thus to employ them. Would that there were many such. But even though there should be but a few, the work of Sunday school instruction can be profitably conducted, if such as are willing to be teachers are willing to do what they can to prepare themselves for the service, combining always the preparation of the heart, with that of the mind; if they meet their pupils, earnestly intent upon using their utmost efforts, and spending the whole time, while with them,

in imparting religious knowledge, and in exerting a religious influence upon their characters; and if they will feel that they are to make it, if possible, a work for life, a regular portion of Sabbath duty while the Sabbath lasts, and that they can only accomplish all that should be expected of them, when their connection with a class becomes so intimate and permanent, that every scholar regards the teacher as a friend for life, and becomes accustomed to meet the teacher as a friend everywhere, in the street and at home, as well as in the school, and acquires the habit of conversing freely with the teacher upon whatever relates to moral and religious improvement. To effect all this may seem to be a great deal; but can a Christian heart be satisfied with less? and can a Christian heart fail to exert such an influence, alike upon teacher and scholar, as will be sure, quietly and gradually, to effect it all? *A Christian heart is*, in my view, *the sum of all qualifications.* Let the heart be right, and such will be the sense of responsibleness, that every faculty will be applied, every opportunity will be improved to do the teacher's work; the Bible will be duly prized; the spirit of devotion will never be absent; and all the lustre of the purest virtue will be constantly reflected from the teacher upon the scholar.

"This is what is wanted, everywhere wanted. Let teachers pray and strive that the want be supplied, or else, but only in such an alternative, let them not feel themselves worthy to be teachers."

Mr. WILLIAM R. SUMNER, superintendent of the school connected with the "Church of the Saviour," writes thus:

"To your first question, 'Do you think teachers generally are properly qualified for their office?' I would answer: certainly not, if by 'properly' is meant completely and entirely. Very few probably are thus qualified. To be thus qualified, is to possess the highest qualities of the mind and heart, to have superior mental endowments, united with a true and heartfelt faith in Christ. Of the two, FAITH is by far the most important qualification, as without it the most gifted mind cannot awaken faith in the minds of others, and with it, minds not richly stored with worldly knowledge, and of limited intellectual powers, can bring many souls to Christ, and lead them in the way to heaven.

"I have thought that the ardent friends of Sunday schools at times over-estimate the value of the institution, as it at present exists, but if Sunday schools should become what they might be, it would be difficult to over-estimate their importance.

"If they do not accomplish all we wish, it is not the fault of the system, but of us who administer its affairs. If we were, each and all of us, what we ought to be, the Sunday school would exert its full power, and might do as much, to say the least, as any other institution, for the souls of men, unless, indeed, we except the pulpit; and when we consider how, in its perfect operation, it would aid and support the pulpit, thus increasing immeasurably its power, I know not that this exception ought to be made.

"The institution will fall short of its highest usefulness, will sink below its proper level, just in proportion to our deficiencies. The knowledge of this fact, and a consciousness of our imperfection, should not deter us from engaging in this work, or from prosecuting it, if already engaged, because, such as we are, it is our duty to sustain an institution which is emphatically a corner-stone of the church. Nor should we be disposed to despond, for although we have not done everything, we have done much; and seeing clearly that the only obstacle to entire success, is our own deficiency, we may by earnest efforts overcome this, and accomplish all we could desire. Faithful and efficient as we may have been, we can be much more so. We may become better than we are, and thus be more competent, if we will but use faithfully every means of strengthening our faith and storing our minds more fully with religious truth. And what shall hinder us from becoming *now*, what we should like our successors to be? There is in fact no insurmountable obstacle. Why should any one leave a class, from a feeling of insufficiency, when he may become, (what it is for his truest interest he should become,) all that is desirable! Instead of despairing, he should supply the conditions.

"In the precise proportion that we elevate our own characters will our power to aid the Sunday school be increased. If there are any teachers belonging to our ranks who are not devoted followers of Christ, I would not say, leave your classes,

but become disciples, in deed and in truth, sit at once at the feet of Jesus, and learn of him, for we cannot teach, until we have learned, and we cannot truly learn, until we have come unto Christ. If we will become little children before Him, we may be as strong men before those whom we would instruct, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Every word and every look will then inspire in others, that faith with which our own heart is filled. This is the only fountain from which the living water will flow.

"In what I have said, I do not mean to intimate that our teachers generally are not well qualified, for I fully believe they are, but it is well for us to admit, what cannot be denied, that our qualifications are not complete, and to labor and pray that they may become more so."

A teacher from Dorchester writes thus:

"No teacher can be thoroughly qualified for the work. It is only the spirit which was in Jesus that is able to show forth and carry forward the religion he taught. The more a teacher possesses of that spirit the better he is qualified for the performance of his duties."

The Rev. Jason Whitman, of Lexington, says:

"I have been inclined to think that teachers are not generally so well qualified as is desirable for their important work. It is too often thought, that any young gentleman or lady in our societies, of generally correct character, is a proper person for this work. I have long doubted the soundness of this view. What is the work? It is, in the first place, to awaken the child to a spiritual life, to a regard for spiritual realities. And how is this to be done? Not by merely talking upon the subject of religion, even though you may talk learnedly. The individual who undertakes to lead a child into the path of Christian truth, must himself have been first awakened to a regard for spiritual realities. He must possess what he attempts to communicate. He must be deeply interested in leading the child to the same state of mind he himself rejoices to cherish. What we want, as the first requisite, is deep and devoted piety, a soul filled with the gospel

spirit, and a heart all alive to spiritual interests. I do not say that we should wait until all this spiritual life is fully developed, before we ask a person to commence the work, but I think we ought not to ask persons to this work, until we have some indications of the existence in the heart, of the germs of all this.

"But piety, important as it is, is not enough. We want teachers to come to their work prepared intellectually. It is not every pious young person that is qualified to teach, or that can interest children. We cannot tell who, in these respects, will be qualified to teach, until the experiment has been made. We shall find some of whom we expected much, deficient in the *tact*, if I may so speak, of teaching. And we shall find others who will astonish us by their unexpected adaptation to the work. I should be inclined then to say, that teachers who are not fully qualified for the work, should not abandon their labor, but should earnestly strive more entirely to prepare themselves for its duties."

Another superintendent, in answer to a question respecting the proper qualifications of teachers, says:

"As to the qualifications for the office of teacher, I do not know that there should be any prescribed as indispensable, except general reputation for good character, sufficient intelligence, and a reasonable expectation of fidelity. The most important qualifications of a teacher, are intelligence, a good share of religious knowledge, an aptness to teach, a love of children, and an earnest, benevolent and religious spirit."

Mr. C. Soule Cartee, superintendent of the Sunday school in Charlestown, and who has lately published a good book of questions on the New Testament, for Sunday school teachers, says:

"Teachers should not act as mere guide-posts in the way of salvation, but should themselves be fellow-travellers, taking the little pilgrims by the hand, as they journey along the strait and narrow path. Added to this, there should be a due degree of intelligence, with aptness to teach."

The Rev. Mr. FOLSOM, of Haverhill, writes:

"The proper qualifications for teachers are a good moral and religious character, a love of the scriptures, a love of teaching, and a love of the young; devotedness to their work, seriousness, as opposed to a light, trifling character, ability to win the confidence and love of children, with wisdom in adapting lessons to their capacities; a cheerful, sprightly, active temper, so as to impart life and secure attention."

A superintendent in Salem, writes:

"Respecting the chief requisites of a Sunday school teacher: Doubtless all will reply that the only one absolutely indispensable to every Sunday school teacher, is a character firmly based upon Christian principles. There are other qualities, both natural and acquired, which render his labors more agreeable to himself, as well as more effective to the scholar. Among those the most prominent, are a knowledge of the Bible, a mind of general cultivation, a persevering and hopeful spirit, with a facility at imparting instruction. After long experience in our school, some of our teachers are inclined to believe that very little good can be effected by a teacher, whose mind is not enlarged by reading and reflection, and whose intellectual powers are uncultivated. To the mental cultivation of a teacher, they would give prominence; it adds dignity to his character and gives weight to his instructions."

A writer from Lynn, says:

"The qualifications are faith, zeal and perseverance. Faith in God and humanity, and the efficacy of man's exertions; Zeal in the exercise of that faith, and Perseverance in overcoming the obstacles that lie in the way."

The superintendent of the Portsmouth Sunday school, Mr. JOHN W. FOSTER, who has been the active superintendent of the Portsmouth Sunday school twenty-eight years, and who seems yet ready to labor, if his life should be spared, for as many years longer, says:

"The important qualifications of a Sunday school teacher are sincere and reverential piety, an enlarged and truly Christian benevolence, sweetness of temper, and pleasantness of manners, industry to study, and aptness to impart religious truth."

If such are to be considered the proper qualifications of a Sunday school teacher, then, as has been suggested by more than one, let not those who are in the work abandon it, but let them put forth renewed diligence to come up as near as possible to the true standard. Let them gird themselves anew for their labor, and with Christian faith and zeal persevere unto the end; feeling that the welfare of the church and the world, depends partly upon their fidelity.

Other questions were put to several correspondents, respecting THE BEST METHOD OF ENLISTING THE RIGHT KIND OF TEACHERS, AND OF IMPROVING THOSE WE HAVE.

In answer to these, the Rev. Mr. WHITMAN says:

"I fear that the difficulty in obtaining the right kind of teachers, arises from the fact that Christians generally do not feel that they are called upon, by all their religious obligations, to work for Christ and for God. Christians seem to feel that religion was given for enjoyment merely, and not committed to them as a sacred trust for the good of mankind; but we ministers should seek ever to impress it on their minds, that they have received this great behest on trust, that they are to dispense it for the good of the community, and that we are accountable for the manner in which we fulfil this trust. I would that we could see all Christians filled with a deep and abiding sense of their obligations in this respect, so that they should be continually asking — "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" If they once feel as they ought, they will find the Sunday School opening before them as one of the ways in which they may labor for Christ and for God. I think the remedy of the present state of things is to be found not in appeals in behalf of Sunday Schools, but in so changing the whole tenor of feeling upon Christian obligation, that every Christian should feel constrained by the love of Christ

to do something for the cause of religion in the world. When Christians shall feel as they ought on this point, then will Sunday Schools and all missionary efforts flourish.

"As to the improvement of the teachers we have already enlisted, I would say that they must be continually reminded of the vast importance of the work in which they are engaged; — of the lasting influence of any impressions, either good or bad, which they may make. Some have thought teachers' meetings all-important. I think them a great help; but the teacher must not depend upon these, either to keep up his interest, or to qualify him for his work. He must seek his principal preparation in communion with God, with his own soul, and with nature, — in the study of God's Word, and in the study of children. The teacher must make diligent preparation for each lesson. The greater the preparation made, the more interest will be felt. The very act of making preparation will of itself awaken interest."

Mr. Wm. R. Sumner says:

"The best method of improving the teachers that we have, as it seems to me, is to hold frequent religious meetings of the teachers and the Bible classes, with such other members of the parish as may feel interested, where important and interesting questions relating to religious truths and duty may be discussed. These meetings are improving, even when the question has no particular bearing on our duties as teachers. Whatever tends to make us more intelligent and earnest as Christians, will increase our qualifications as teachers.

"In order to enlist more of the right kind of teachers, it is important that the truly religious persons in a parish, should be led to see duty as it really exists, and they will come forward voluntarily to the aid of the Sunday school, either as teachers or pupils. The whole strength of the parish should be brought to bear upon the Sunday school. It is worthy this, if it is worthy anything. As the pastor has duties, so have the people. Every member of the Society should feel that he has a part to act. If he cannot teach, he can learn. Be he ever so old, or young, his place can be found *somewhere* in the Sunday school. A school formed on this basis, enlists the hearty sympathy of those who are competent to manage its concerns, and by engaging in its various departments, per-

sons of every age, furnishes from its own ranks an abundant supply of competent teachers, whenever the pastor or superintendent may need their aid."

Another correspondent writes:

"The best way to enlist the right kind of teachers, and to improve those we have, will be, to make the value of Christianity (and the importance of Sunday Schools, as a means of promoting it,) more deeply felt. No Sabbath school can be so efficient an instrument in advancing the kingdom of Christ, where individual exertion is alone depended upon, as where teachers frequently meet for mutual improvement and consultation upon their duties; where they study together, impart information to each other, strengthening each other's faith, and availing themselves of the results of each other's experience."

These suggestions are certainly worthy of much consideration. If teachers will come together for mutual advantage, the benefit must be felt; and if, when they come together, they will make a personal effort to add to the interest of the meeting, the satisfaction derived from such opportunities will be far greater than could otherwise be experienced. When we connect with this the earnest labors of a devoted minister, and the personal study of the Scriptures, and self-examination, we have certainly great sources of improvement. But it may be asked, what is the direct effect of teaching upon those who engage in it? Is it advantageous to personal progress, or not? — and to this I would next call your attention.

On THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHING UPON THOSE WHO ARE ENGAGED AS TEACHERS, the President of this Society writes as follows:

"No effect is more visible in a school, than its influence in exciting, in teachers, a personal interest in religion. We believe that there can be scarcely one of our number, who is not able to give decisive testimony to this effect."

Mr. CARTEE, of Charlestown, writes:

"To the Sunday School teacher there is this encouragement; no one can attempt to teach a child morality and piety, without feeling the necessity of SELF-improvement, and the force of good example; like Goldsmith's Village Preacher, who

> "Tried each act, reproved each dull delay,
> Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way."

"In proportion as Sunday School teachers labor for the religious culture of the young, they directly benefit *themselves.*"

Another writer says:

"In *many* instances, we might say in *most*, the effect of teaching upon teachers has been highly beneficial in producing a thirst for religious knowledge, which has led them to seek the fountain of religious light and hope, which we trust has proved to them 'a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.'"

Mr. LEWIS G. PRAY, who has been for nineteen years Superintendent of a large Sabbath school, writes:

"In general, we are agreed, that the effect of teaching on those who teach is, to produce a deeper practical interest in religion. It improves the mind, corrects the heart, fortifies principle, and elevates the moral and religious character.

"Of our whole number of teachers during the period of twenty-years, NOT ONE HAS FALLEN. We are accustomed to remark that if the school does but little apparently for the child, we are satisfied that it does much for the teacher."

Mr. FOSTER, of Portsmouth, with his experience of twenty-eight years, writes:

"As to the influence of the teachers' connection with the school *upon themselves*, the voice of the maturest teachers, while living, and also while upon the very bed of death, has been uniformly and emphatically that the school has been one of the most important instruments of divine grace in producing upon their minds and hearts a deep and lively interest in practical religion."

Thus we see that the Sunday school has one constant and certain means of improvement within itself, its own spiritual labors being admirably calculated to quicken the religious powers, calling forth the best affections and leading the soul to a deeper consciousness of the greatness and glory of religious truth. There is no better sphere for self-improvement. A devoted teacher, by every effort made to impart information, will himself gain new light. His preparations will naturally lead him to acquire wider knowledge. His intercourse with fellow-teachers will prove a constant advantage, and his new opportunities of meeting with the pastor, and hearing his exhortations and expositions of Scripture, will prove an additional source of good. We are sympathetic beings, and the zeal and energy of one or two, will diffuse itself through a wide circle. The teacher who is not, at first, deeply in earnest, may receive new impulses from the more ardent minds around him. Growing out of these duties, there are salutary restraints and a natural tendency to self-inspection. There is, also, the influence of childhood, brought constantly before the mind — childhood, with its simplicity and purity, and childhood in its best aspects, coming to us to receive instruction in virtue, and to be led upward in the path of Christian knowledge and excellence. No one can put himself under such influences, who has any willingness to improve, and not feel the advantage which he will certainly derive. Hundreds have been led by its duties to the highest religious enjoyments; and multitudes, who have passed from these scenes of time, have found in it the means of salvation.

In regard to METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: In different schools different plans are adopted, and generally in the same school the various teachers are left much to the use of their own judgment, pursuing such a course as the age of their pupils and their own tastes may lead them to believe most beneficial. Manuals have generally been found useful, and

by some are considered indispensable. They aid in giving a more systematic character to instruction. Where they are used by the pupils at home, they aid the child in giving direction to his thoughts, and suggesting what is to be done. They aid the teacher, also, in preparation. Still, they are liable to great abuse, if they are relied on too much, — if they are followed exclusively, and particularly if they are closely followed in the school, and check personal conversation, and lead to a mechanical routine. In connection with order and system, it is highly desirable that there should be free and pleasant conversation, a natural and cheerful interchange of thought, something which will show religion to be connected with actual life, and to take hold of the affections. Nothing will tend more to interest the pupil and satisfy the teacher. Conversational powers should be cultivated as a sacred duty. Many who can converse freely enough upon other subjects are sadly deficient here. The most important and delightful topics of human thought, we should learn to converse upon, so as to give pleasure to ourselves and instruction to others. This will be found one of the surest means of usefulness.

But when we speak of Manuals, they are ever to be held as secondary, and only as a help to aid in the study of scripture; and when we speak of conversation, it is not conversation upon every subject, but religious conversation, based upon gospel truth. It is true that many topics may come up connected with nature and with duty, and they need not always be connected directly with the Bible, but they should always be in harmony with the scripture; and that volume should ever be the ground-work of all our labors. That should be looked to, as the sacred source of Christian knowledge — a divine revelation given by the God of heaven and earth for our counsel and direction.

WHAT PLACE DOES THE BIBLE HOLD IN THE ESTIMATION OF OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS?

We give a few extracts upon this subject.

STEPHEN C. PHILLIPS writes as follows:

"To us the Bible is 'the Book of books,' — the 'all in all,' as a source of instruction. We regard it as the highest privilege of our office, that in attempting to teach, we have been put in the right way to learn the Bible. We study it by the best use of our understandings, with all such aid from the superior learning of others, as we are able to obtain. In the study of the New Testament, we have been greatly aided by the use of Livermore's commentaries, and by the familiar expositions of our pastor. So far as we have occasion, we impart to our scholars all the knowledge we have acquired, and endeavor to give them the strongest impressions of the authority, the sacredness, and the inestimable value of the Bible."

Another writer says:

"We make the Bible our principal text-book, considering it the well-spring of spiritual life, from which we can draw all that is beautiful to cultivate the mind, and all that is ennobling to elevate the character, using other books as a means of so increasing our knowledge, that we may read that with more enlarged views."

Another writer says:

"We believe the Bible is most reverently regarded as the only pure and unfailing source of religious knowledge. In some classes it is used alone without aid from any text-books, and in all, it is constantly appealed to for doctrine and precept."

Mr. FOSTER, of Portsmouth, says:

"The Bible, but especially the New Testament, is regarded by us as the fountain head, to which we must resort for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. A brief outline of the history, with selections from the

sublime and interesting narratives and passages of the Old Testament, is all that has been attempted with regard to *those* books; but the Gospels, the Acts, and portions of the Epistles of the New Testament, form the chief study of all our classes, with such helps as a good parish library, a small teacher's library, and such private resources as may be possessed, together with our pastor's ever ready assistance, will afford."

Another writer says:

"We regard the Bible as *the basis of all instruction;* and by the majority of teachers, it is used to the exclusion of all other books. We adopt it as our text-book in all our discussions; and the various subjects of interest which arise, we present for the instruction of our classes."

Other extracts might be given, both in regard to the use of manuals and the Bible; but these opinions are in harmony with the views expressed by all; manuals to be used with caution, as aids, and the Bible to be considered as the perpetual text-book and never-failing source of divine wisdom, the sure guide of life and the sacred record of God's revelation to mankind. The biography of the Old Testament offers abundant examples for illustration, and the pages of the New Testament are full and overflowing with heavenly truth.

Some extracts from letters will now be given upon other subjects connected with the interests of the Sunday school.

The first is from a letter by Rev. Mr. WHITMAN, of Lexington: It contains important views:

"LEXINGTON, May 15th, 1846.

"Yours of the 12th was yesterday received, and I hasten to answer it. You ask, 'When you look upon the Sunday school, is there any thing you feel to be wanting which you consider desirable?' The first deficiency which I notice is, that the influence and instruction of our schools are too vague and indefinite. Our children attend school, learn many good

lessons, hear many excellent addresses, and engage in many pleasant conversations upon religious subjects; and then they go out into the world, with many good feelings, and wishes, and resolutions, but with nothing very definite or fixed in their minds. And this, I have feared, is the natural result of the low aims of teachers. Do they seek to make their scholars Christians now, and to prepare them for all the struggles and trials of the Christian life hereafter? But what do I mean by making them Christians now? What I mean is, that the teacher should strive to awaken the child to a full conception of his own spiritual nature, to a deep feeling of love to God. This, I suppose, all teachers are trying to do now. But what I wish to see in addition is, that the teacher should, as far as possible, form the child to the habit of the daily and hourly application of these views to the regulation of the conduct. In order to do this, the teacher must leave the world of his own thoughts and feelings, and enter the world of the child's thoughts and feelings. He must converse with the child about his conduct, not in the stern manner of a dictator, but with all the affection of a friend, who appreciates the child's struggles, and looks in compassion upon the child's weakness, and encourages the child to make a confidant of him in all his thoughts, feelings, and principles. I fear that there is the same barrier between the teacher and his pupils, that there is between a pastor and his people. They talk, but it is at arm's length, over a partition wall, by which they are separated from each other. The first thing, then, for a teacher to aim at is, to get into living contact with the child's heart, so that the child shall regard him as a spiritual counsellor and friend to whom he can go with confessions of failures and faults, with details of struggles, doubts, and difficulties, seeking for counsel and advice. If this is accomplished the great work is more than half done. The teacher may do much in this familar, confidential intercourse, for the child's own character and conduct, to make him a Christian now, — in other words, to lead him to adopt Christian principles, — pursue a Christian course of conduct, and breathe a Christian spirit now while a child, from day to day and from week to week.

"But this is not enough. The child may be made truly religious in his childhood, and yet not prepared for all the

struggles of the Christian life. He should be prepared for these. And to what dangers and struggles will the religious life be exposed? It will be exposed to dangers arising from erroneous religious speculations. The purest heart, if the mind be not well informed, will not guard against this danger. The children, therefore, in our Sunday schools, should be taught, I think, distinctly, the doctrines of religion, — the great principles of the gospel, — and the reasons, or arguments, upon which they rest, together with the manner in which the objections to these doctrines are answered. I would have this done, not for the purpose of making them, or keeping them Unitarians, but for the purpose of giving them clear and distinct ideas of the doctrines of the gospel, and for the purpose of forming them to the habit of thorough and careful investigations of all doctrinal questions. I would do it so that if the child hereafter should forsake the doctrines of Unitarian Christianity, and adopt others, he may know what he leaves, and why he leaves them and adopts others. It is too often the case, that when men change from one denomination to another, they have only vague ideas; they know nothing clearly in regard to the system which they leave, or the system which they adopt. And the very reasons assigned for the change, are often such as a clear understanding of the system they forsake would have banished entirely from the mind. I think, then, that our pupils should, after the heart is engaged, be taught the doctrines of our religion, with the reasons by which they are supported.

"Still further: the child may have experience of good emotions, — may have a clear view of the great doctrines of Christianity, — and yet not be fully prepared for all the dangers and trials of the religious life. He needs fixed principles of conduct, based upon the doctrines he has studied, and warmed into life and efficiency by the emotions he has experienced. I would have the practical principles of the gospel taught with great clearness, and their application to all the great moral interests of man, pointed out. Many of our children go out from our Sunday schools, and enter upon their business life, with no principles fixed, which would prevent them from engaging in the traffic which is dealing penury and death around the land, — with no principles which would prevent them from becoming slave-holders, should they re-

move to the south, — with no principles which would prevent their engaging in the unchristian practice of war. They have heard many good things upon these subjects. — have experienced many good feelings upon them. But they have no fixed principles in regard to them. Ought not instructions to be given upon these things, — instructions which would send out yearly, from our Sunday schools, those who should be decided, and decided upon principles in regard to all those great reforms, — who should be prepared, by their conscientious regard for the will of God and the instructions of Christ, to take a stand in open opposition to the evils and sins which these reforms are endeavoring to remove from the world. The very process of study required to fix these principles, — the very inquiries which would be instituted, as to the relation of Christian principles to these evils, would tend to form the habit of bringing all practices, customs and institutions to the test of Christian principles, and prepare them to carry forward the work of reform until all wrong-doing is removed from the world. I have pointed out three objects as desirable in the Sunday school, — the awakening spiritual life in the soul, — the instruction of the head in the truths of Christianity, and fixing the great practical principles of the gospel in the heart, and giving them the control over the life. It seems to me, that on all these points there is a deficiency, that there is much vagueness, and that our pupils go from our schools with much less than they ought to carry, of clear ideas and fixed principles.

"Still further: Teachers should keep the same classes. Where there is continual changing of teachers or scholars there will be but little efficiency in the one, and but little interest in the other."

The next letter is from the Rev. Mr. HALL, of Providence, and contains suggestions worthy of reflection:

"PROVIDENCE, May 20, 1846.

"*Dear Sir:*

"In reply to your questions respecting Sunday schools, I would say much, had I time to arrange and condense. For nearly two years, I have had the entire superintendence of a school of one hundred and sixty children; and it has given me knowledge which I had not before, and could not in any

other way obtain, of the difficulty of making these schools what they should be. With all the burden thus added to a minister's labors, and the impossibility of his *always* sustaining this burden, I do believe it would be of essential service to the system and the object, if all ministers would make the attempt even for a short time. I am persuaded we have left the work too much to other hands; not that we can do it best, or half as well as many others, but that we may thus bring ourselves into personal connection with it, and acquire a knowledge at least of its difficulties and duties, such as we cannot in any other way.

"You ask, in your letter, — 'When you think of the Sunday school, is there any one thing which you feel to be wanting, you consider desirable?' My experience may be no guide for others, and all schools may differ. But my own feeling is, that the thing most wanting, and most desirable, is a larger proportion of *mature*, and, if possible, *parental* teachers. Much good, I know, is done by young teachers, particularly to their own minds and hearts. But there are children whom they cannot instruct as more experienced and parental teachers could. The original objection to these schools, that they separate children too much from the instruction and the responsibility of parents, will be found to have more force than was allowed, if we do not take earnest heed. The tendency, so far as I can judge, is to employ younger and younger teachers, and I find the danger and feel the temptation myself, as a superintendent, from the difficulty, indeed the impossibility, of getting older teachers. I bear witness to the fidelity and success of many young teachers. I thank them. I only ask that they may be *aided*. Parents may feel the importance and laud the usefulness of Sabbath schools; but if it be true, as my own limited observation leads me to fear, and as some of the larger denominations are said to feel to an alarming degree, that elders and parents are dismissing more and more from their own hands and minds that first duty which nature and God have committed to *them*, — the religious instruction of their children, — if they are not even making themselves acquainted with the real instructors, sympathizing with their difficulties, or in any way coöperating in this sacred and momentous work, if they do nothing, moreover, to aid their children in preparing for it, neither en-

couraging their interest, nor helping or learning their impressions, — it requires neither an alarmist nor a prophet to tell what will be the end of these things. It is enough that *common* schooling is left so much to chance, and that parents have so little to do with its instruments and helpers. The teachings of the soul, the training of whole generations for all life and for immortality, cannot be so left without imminent peril. Yet as a general truth, are not parents better acquainted and more concerned with common schools, than with Sunday schools?

"I have no time for other points; and this, if just, is sufficiently suggestive, and has many relations. With best wishes for all engaged in this arduous and responsible work,

"I am truly yours,

"E. B. HALL."

The following letter is from Rev. Dr. NICHOLS, of Portland:

"PORTLAND, May 14, 1846.

"If the minds of children are susceptible of deep moral impressions from those they respect and love, no reason can be given why they should not be capable of receiving them from the Sunday school teacher. He may be the means of stamping an effectual motive to virtue upon an immortal soul. There are other interesting views of the utility of his office. But I should say of them, in comparison with this, what is the chaff to the wheat? No one can believe in the Christian religion, without confessing the solemn obligation he is under of doing all in his power to extend the blessings of the gospel. The Sunday school affords a good opportunity for him to bear his part in the holy ministry of the truth; and surely he cannot regard an hour every week as an undue proportion of time to be devoted to a work of this magnitude. He should view it as his privilege, I conceive, to be a Sunday school teacher, while he has a gospel to answer for at the bar of God. I would countenance no sombre or gloomy state of mind, but a simple, natural sense of duty, accompanied with an affectionate interest in children, such as every one may be presumed to feel who possesses ordinary sensibilities. As to the instruction itself, a sincere aim will be guide and reward sufficient, I judge, in this matter. I have thought it would be

well, if teachers would endeavor, for a *series* of Sundays, to make a solemn impression upon their pupils, — sometimes as to one important truth, and sometimes another, — now, the encouragement to virtue, and now the dissuasives from vice, &c., &c. Only let there be something consecutive for a season; and let every teacher make a business of preparing himself with some pertinent illustrations during the week. I know of no more suitable improvement for every Christian to make of his conscious inability to control the great events of the world, than to be more resolved to do what he can in a small way, if those things may be called small which concern the welfare of immortal souls.

"With my best wishes for your success and that of your brethren in the noble cause upon which you have written to me, believe me, yours truly,

"J. NICHOLS.

"*Rev. Mr. Waterston.*"

The following is from Mr. EVANS, of Bristol, England:

"*Dear Sir:*

"Anxious not to suffer the pleasant and useful intercourse which has so long existed between our societies to be suspended, I take up my pen to give you some account of our proceedings since our last communication.

"We read with much interest the last report of your society. You, like ourselves, experienced the difficulties which ever attend efforts to overcome or lessen moral evil; — the disappointments which so often check our ardor instead of exciting us to redoubled efforts; — the apathy of those who profess to be disciples of him whose life was spent in holy effort; — the looking back of those who have put their hands to the plough. But, blessed be God, we can also reciprocate more encouraging feelings; for the longer societies like ours exist and faithfully persevere, the more distinctly do we trace the real good which they have effected.

"I imagine the chief dangers of Sunday schools is, in their tendency to become mere matters of routine, and thus to lose that vitality which in the earlier stages diffused its influence through all their branches. But Christianity never can grow old, and thus should our efforts also be earnestly directed to prevent the listlessness and inaction of old age

from creeping over our churches and schools, in place of that ever fresh and vigorous life, which alone can bear us onward in our labor of love; which alone will sanctify those labors and cause them to bring forth the gospel fruit; which alone can prove that we are animated by that holy spirit which seeks not man's reward or praise.

"Our schools in Bristol have gone on, during this year, in much their accustomed course. I cannot say that we have gone back, but we have not been able materially to remedy those deficiencies to which we have occasionally alluded. I particularly refer to teachers visiting their pupils *at home*, and a regular system of training our younger teachers.

"This last is a deficiency in which perhaps you cannot fully sympathize with us, on account of the greater facilities of education in your country; but we shall agree that it is of essential service for the religious feelings (which ought to be the mainspring of a Sunday school teacher's actions) to be cherished and encouraged when they *do* exist, and to be excited when they *do not*, by friendly meetings of teachers, aided by their ministers, or some judicious and experienced friend. A plan for rendering the study of the gospels more interesting has been carried on with some success during this year. Every Sunday afternoon, the superintendent takes a portion of Dr. Carpenter's "Harmony of the Gospels," and reads it to the whole school, minutely explaining it by illustrations of every available kind, including the frequent use of maps and pictures. Every class then takes up privately the same portions; the teachers availing themselves of the superintendent's explanations and adapting them to the capacities of their respective classes. When the teacher fully enters into this plan, it becomes very interesting and useful, both to themselves and pupils, and the gospels themselves are far better understood, by the life of our Saviour being thus brought before the eyes.

"Yours very faithfully,

"Hugh C. Evans."

The following is a brief extract from a letter by Miss Carpenter, dated Bristol, April 16, 1846.

"Christianity is with us the great object of Sunday school teaching. In some towns where circumstances render it dif-

ficult for children to obtain schooling during the week, secular instruction is also given; but I believe that in no school in England would a doubt be entertained that the life of Christ, *as contained in the gospels*, should be the great object of our teaching.

"With respect to what is termed doctrinal instruction, I believe that it is now felt in our Sunday schools that it is not only desirable, but our duty, to instil into the minds of the children those views which we believe the simple and explicit teachings of Christ, which cannot, as such, be otherwise than important. When we commenced our Sunday school, now more than a quarter of a century ago, it was a rule of the school, that no doctrinal instruction should be given. We had then scarcely any poor or laboring persons in our congregation, and we wished to open our school to any who might be willing to profit by it. Now, however, a large proportion of our children are from members of our own congregation, and were it not so, increased experience has for many years led us to feel that though what is called doctrinal instruction should not be made a *prominent* part of our teaching, yet that it is right, as occasion presents itself, distinctly to instruct our scholars in the great truth that the Father is the only object of religious worship, FROM WHOM are all things, and that Christ is his inspired Messenger and well-beloved Son, *through whom* are all things."

As this is an important subject, we will give one or two extracts upon this point from others.

Mr. LEWIS G. PRAY writes as follows:

"As the doctrines of Christianity are scattered along and glitter as pearls on every page of the New Testament, so our scholars, as they follow their teachers over this divine pathway of knowledge, are made acquainted, necessarily, with the nature and value of those great principles, doctrines and truths, which it was the mission of the blessed Saviour to reveal to mankind. At a proper age, in our more advanced classes, we use a manual, entitled, 'Scripture Truths,' which leads us in those classes, to teach the views of our own denomination; and in those, as well as in our Bible classes, when necessary,

or as they naturally arise, we give proper explanations of all controversial questions."

The Superintendent of the Portsmouth Sunday school, says:

"We have never given any systematic lessons upon doctrinal subjects, so called, and we have never given prominence to controversial questions, as such, but while we have carefully discouraged a controversial spirit, we have endeavored to meet such subjects, when they came up naturally, with freedom, and to give the simplest and plainest instructions in our power."

Mr. PHILLIPS writes:

"We endeavor to explain whatever we suppose to be taught in the Bible, as we pursue the study of it. We must thus give our own views of the nature and character of God and Christ, and of the present and future life. To the youngest children, we wish only to present the simplest ideas; but the simplest ideas, in most cases, are those which Jesus uttered. In expounding particular texts to the older children, we always tell them in what different ways they are interpreted by different sects; and while we give the reasons for preferring our own views, we always say to them, that as they grow up they must examine and judge for themselves, and be sure to form their own opinions deliberately and conscientiously. We always speak kindly and charitably of fellow Christians of other denominations, and seek to give children the impression that Christians may differ in many points of faith, and yet all be sincere and faithful disciples of a common Master, as they are all children of one Father."

In addition to the above extracts upon important subjects connected with the religious instruction of the young, we offer a few facts and incidents.

Mr. LEWIS G. PRAY states the following fact, which shows the effect of instruction upon the pupils of one school:

"One thousand pupils have been entered upon our record in eighteen years. After a careful inspection of all their names, with a pretty good and general knowledge of their past and present history and character, we know of but three or

four who have not been successful in business, promising in their respective spheres of action, and sustaining pure and elevated characters."

"In regard to encouragement," says the Superintendent of the Portsmouth school, "as we have, in our long experience, seen how youthful heedlessness and frivolity, and even stubborn wilfulness and depravity, have in after life shown evidence that the labor expended on them, and the seed sown almost in hopelessness, have not been vain. When we hear, as we have heard, the homely tribute of gratitude to a departed teacher, uttered by the hardy sailor and the toil-worn laborer, and the affectionate tones of the sobered woman lament the manner in which she formerly trifled with teachings which yet cling to her memory, and also when we hear the now active and earnest teacher tell her pupils of the remembrances of her own beloved teacher, now a saint in heaven; — when we hear such things, — (and the elder among us have heard them again and again,) — then we say there are encouragements enough to cheer us onward, and which, with resistless eloquence, urge us to be faithful unto the end."

Of several incidents which are given, we will select but one, which is stated by the Superintendent of the Sunday school in Charlestown:

"Sunday school teachers should never despair. We will state a case which may afford encouragement to the most desponding.

"A gentleman of Boston, who was traveling last Summer in Vermont, had stopped at a certain village, where he was to remain for a few days, and, as is usual for those who travel for improvement as well as pleasure, he strolled out towards sunset of a charming day, to see whatever of interest the place might afford. In the course of his walk, he observed the village grave-yard. He entered it in a frame of mind well calculated to receive a lesson, were any to be learned there.

"Among its numerous graves, his eye chanced to fall upon one that was newly turfed, and marked with a plain marble headstone, bearing no other inscription than this, "TO MY SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER." He at once felt a curiosity to know its history, and upon inquiry, he learned the following incidents.

"A man in that village had been known in the community as a despiser of God and a contemner of holy things. In the midst of his sinful career, he was prostrated by a severe illness, that threatened dissolution; but though aware of his critical situation, his heart was not touched with penitence. A neighbor came in and requested to read a portion of scripture, and to pray with him. He replied that it was a matter of indifference to him, — he might read or not. The Bible was opened and a passage from one of the Gospels was read to him, which was hardly finished ere the hardened sinner was weeping like a child. When sufficiently composed, he told his kind neighbor the cause of so unlooked for an emotion. He said that many years ago, when he was a child, he went to the Sunday school, and that the very passage which had just been read formed one of the lessons he had learned from his Sunday school teacher. He had not read the Bible since, and his teacher had been dead some years. The circumstance carried him back to the days of his childhood, and recalled the counsel of his kind teacher. He wished himself a child again, but that could not be. He humbled himself before God, and prayed for mercy. He became truly penitent, and determined to lead a Christian life, and God spared him yet longer. When recovered, his first act was one of gratitude to his Sunday school teacher. Her spirit had long since gone to its reward above. He could not therefore speak his thanks to her. He sought her grave, and wept there. He raised its sunken mound, and erected the plain head-stone, with the simple inscription — "TO MY SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER."

"Take courage, then, ye whose labors of love are given to the young. Though many seeds may fall by the way-side, the fowls of the air may not discover and devour them all. A single grain may so conceal itself as to defy destruction, and finally germinate even at the eleventh hour."

We now proceed to offer the *Report of the Agency*, as given by the Chairman, Mr. LEWIS G. PRAY, to whose devoted labors this Society has long been, and continues to be, under great obligation.

REPORT OF THE AGENCY.

It gives the Agents of the Sunday School Society pleasure to report, that in their department, the past year has been one of more than usual activity and successful operation. They have been assisted by four clergymen and five laymen, who have embraced every proper opportunity to engage in this good work with a willing and hearty interest.

They have visited, during the year, schools in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, N. Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Canada and Massachusetts.

The number of towns to which they have gone is .	51
The number of schools visited and addressed, .	76
The number of teachers in these schools, .	1,365
The number of pupils, ...	8,320
Addresses made, ...	90
Children and adults addressed, . . .	15,313
Miles traveled, ...	4,016
Expenses of the Agency, . . .	$ 128,26

In this view of their labors, compressed into a single table of figures for the sake of brevity, no idea is conveyed of the condition of the schools visited, or the amount or appreciation of their own labors. A single sentence or two, therefore, on these points, must be added.

All the reports speak favorably and encouragingly of the condition and prospects of our Sunday schools, with the exception of one or two at the South. At no previous period in their history could the agents speak more confidently than now, of a prevailing and vital interest in the worth and work of early religious instruction. A number of important Sunday school Conventions, — especially the one at Salem, — have been held within the year, besides the regular semi-annual meetings of the Worcester, Middlesex, West Worcester,

and the Cheshire Sunday School Associations. Some one or more of the Agents have been present at most of these meetings, and have come away from them with a strong conviction that for numbers, talent, and devoted interest and zeal, none better could hardly be expected, if desired. In each instance there were present two, three or four hundred teachers, with their pastors, representing a large circuit of schools and churches; and in one instance, besides the pastors and teachers, six hundred children, — fifty from a single town, — coming to enjoy and improve the occasion, a distance of ten or a dozen miles. The discussions, addresses and sermons at these conventions and large assemblages of teachers, were of a highly practical, serious and earnest character, and we are not permitted to doubt that they have contributed not a little to elevate, all over the Commonwealth, the standard of religious education, methods of Christian instruction, and the best interests of all our schools. The presence and services of your Agents have been every where cordially welcomed, and, so far as they are permitted to judge, their labors more than sufficiently appreciated, for which they are truly grateful.

Of the special visits reported, Rev. A. B. Muzzey has made five; Rev. F. T. Gray, six; R. W. Bayley, eight; Isaiah Bangs, nine; G. F. Thayer, fifteen; Rev. Charles Brooks, seventeen; and Lewis G. Pray, twenty-three. Other visits have been made by Rev. R. C. Waterston and G. G. Channing, Esq., but not included in this report, as no returns have been received.

The duty of publishing tracts for gratuitous distribution, is confided to a sub-committee of the Agents. During the past year, thay have published four new tracts, of 4,000 each, with the following titles: — "The Contrast," — "Self-Denial," — "Perseverance, or I'll try," — and "Obedience and Forgiveness." The last two were written by a Sunday school pupil, as a free-will offering on the altar of piety. Of these

and their other tracts, they have distributed to the amount of something over 8,000 copies, or 75,000 pages. A large proportion of these have been sent to distant schools, East and West, in accordance with the request of an unknown donor, by whose generous bounty, for the second time, of twenty-five dollars, a large edition of one or two of these tracts have been printed. They have been sent and distributed to schools in Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, and to various other places at greater or less distances from the city.

In addition to these tracts, they have furnished some new and feeble schools, in distant places, with manuals and books for their Juvenile Libraries. The Society has also published their Annual Report, to the number of two thousand and some hundred copies, which have been sent to most of our schools in the Union.

It gives them pleasure to state, that thirteen persons have been made, by their Sunday schools or parishes, life-members of the Society, since the publication of their last Annual Report; namely, — David Tower, Cohassett; Nathan Clark, Waltham; Rev. Hiram Withington, Leominster; Rev. Joseph Allen, Northboro'; Benjamin B. Davis, Brookline; Rev. E. Q. Sewall, and Mrs. E. Q. Sewall, Scituate; Rev. Seth Chandler, Shirley; Hon. B. Cooke, Keene, N. H.; W. G. Crosby, Belfast, Me.; David Paige, Bulfinch st. school, and N. A. Bassett, Purchase st. school, Boston; and J. H. Frothingham, Brooklyn, N. Y.

By these generous contributions to their funds, the Agents have been able to meet not only all their increased expenditures during the past year, but report a remaining balance, which will enable them, with continued encouragement, to do more extended good in the year to come.

We add the names of the towns visited :— Baltimore, Md.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Montreal, Canada; Hartford and Brooklyn, Conn.; Portsmouth, Keene, Manchester and Nashua,

N. H.; Burlington, Vt.; Augusta, Portland and Saco, Me.; and in Massachusetts, Athol, (West Worcester Association,) schools in Boston, Brighton, Brookline, Bridgewater, Brewster, Bolton, (Worcester Association,) Cambridge, Cambridgeport, Cohasset, Dover, Dorchester, Fairhaven, Framingham, Kennebunk, Lowell, Milton, Mendon, Medford, Marlboro', Northboro', Plymouth, Quincy, Roxbury, Salem, (Convention,) South Brookfield, Shirley, Sherburne, Stow, Springfield, Southboro', Taunton, Thompson's Island, Walpole, Worcester, Wayland, (Middlesex Sunday School Association,) West Dedham, West Cambridge.

Having thus considered several important subjects connected with Sunday schools, — the proper qualifications of Sunday school teachers; — the best method of enlisting the right kind of teachers, and of improving those we have; — the influence of teaching upon those who are engaged as teachers; — the best methods of instruction; — the place which the Bible should hold in the estimation of teachers, — together with several other topics brought forward in letters, and the general statement of the Agency, we will hasten to bring this Report to a close. All things are now encouraging, but still there is ample room for improvement. There are defects, but they are such as can be remedied. Every superintendent and every teacher should strive to leave nothing undone. The particular school with which they are connected should call forth their earnest effort, and with untiring zeal and true Christian devotion, they should seek to bring all its operations and instructions as near as possible to the highest standard of the gospel. With renewed effort, much more

might be accomplished; and we ought not to rest satisfied as we are. Clergymen may do much to give needed information, and to kindle and diffuse a right spirit; and parents, instead of leaving teachers to do all, should heartily coöperate. They should know that they have a heart and a hand to assist, and by this general sympathy, new incentives to exertion would spring into existence. There would be stronger bonds of union, and the whole work of the religious instruction of the young, would be associated with encouragement and joy.

May the same kind providence which has watched over us hitherto, still direct and bless us, and lead us to the more perfect fulfilment of duty, and to higher attainments in excellence.

Respectfully submitted,

R. C. WATERSTON.

ANNIVERSARY

OF

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Eighteenth public Annual Meeting of this Society took place on Wednesday evening, May 27th, at Rev. Dr. Gannett's Church. Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, of Salem, President, in the Chair. The Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Cordner, of Montreal. Rev. R. C. Waterston, Corresponding Secretary, read the Annual Report. In speaking of the agency employed by the Society, he stated that it had during the past year been more than usually active and successful. Fifty-one towns had been visited by the respective agents, and seventy-six schools had been addressed. The number of teachers in these, 1365,—of scholars, 8320. Eight thousand copies of tracts had been distributed. Various conventions, well attended by delegates, had been held in various places.

We may state here, that the services of the evening were interspersed with the singing of hymns, by a select choir of scholars from the Sunday schools in this city.

William Brigham, Esq., of Boston, moved the acceptance of the Report, with which he entirely concurred in sentiment. He was not called upon here, and now, to argue the necessity and importance of the Sunday school. That point was settled. The Sunday school was a part of our system of instruction, — had taken its place among the moral means for the training of the young. It was an institution added to the provision made by the Pilgrims. They established free schools, that all might be able to read the Bible. Among

the multiplicity of sects that had sprung up, it was found inexpedient to give religious instruction in the public schools; hence Sunday schools have become needful. All sects, Catholics as well as Protestants, are interested in them. He rejoiced at this. Suppose some errors of doctrine were taught, — some tenets of sectarians inculcated. What of that? The child is educated, inquiring minds are developed. Connected with the 100 churches in this city, there are 17,000 Sunday school scholars, — about one seventh of our population. Our free schools are supported at an expense of $300,000, and contain 16,000 children. Those Sunday schools are taught by 2,000 voluntary teachers. Suppose these schools abolished, and what would be the effect, — in a few years, — immediately? Who is not sure that, very soon, the whole community would cry out for their restoration?

Mr. B. then referred to a recent speech of a senator from Pennsylvania, who declared that at the tap of the drum thousands of his constituents would be ready to start to the battle field. He thought if that sentiment was true, and would gain the senator popularity at home, it did not speak well for his State, did not show that the Sunday school was there doing its work. Who doubts if this institution had been in efficient existence all over the land, we should not now see the sad spectacle of a nation of ten millions engaged in a war with their brethren.

The work of educating the young must be carried on. It is the great mission of this age. The child is now born who will see in this country a population of one hundred millions. Who shall they be? Ignorant, base, vicious men, or men of intelligence, integrity and virtue? Shall they be men prepared for the usurpation of any military despot, — or men to uphold our institutions, and promote human well-being? That is the question. Can we remain indifferent? The labor of Sunday school teachers is quiet and humble, — but more heroic and glorious than that of any military leader. Their efforts combined can do more than armies, — obtain a glory that shall remain

> "When victors' wreaths, and monarchs' gems,
> Shall blend in common dust."

Mr. Warren, of Boston, seconded the motion of Mr. Brigham. Alluding to a form of prayer for the evening, by Sir Walter Scott, he thought we might thank God, that we were

able to quit the bustle and parade of the streets, to meet here in such a place, for such a purpose. Because he had been in several places a superintendent, and because he was a layman, he had been requested to bear his testimony to the Sunday school. This request he had not felt at liberty to decline. He was here as a witness, and was quite ready and willing to affirm that this institution, in its spirit, conduct, effects, was good, gentle, pure, holy and Christian. It had no sins, except those of omission; and these were fast being remedied. He then proceeded to speak of the influences of the Sunday school, — the importance of the teacher's office, — the obligation upon the church, — parents, teachers, pastors, — to sustain and encourage it, not merely in its form but in its spirit.

Rev. S. G. Bulfinch, of Nashua, N. H., followed Mr. Warren. He commenced by remarking, that it was sometimes the lot of hearers to listen to the same sermon in one place, which they had heard before in another. If any of those whom he now addressed should find themselves thus circumstanced, he must divide the responsibility with the committee of arrangements, who had requested him to repeat some remarks which he had offered on another occasion. To continue his comparison of a sermon, he would take for his text the lines of Goldsmith, descriptive of the good village pastor, and not less applicable to the good Sunday school teacher:

> "And as the bird each fond allurement tries
> To tempt its new fledged offspring to the skies,
> He tries each art, reproves each dull delay,
> Allures to brighter worlds, and leads the way."

The comparison here made suggests the idea of that tender, parental interest which the teacher ought to feel in those committed to his charge. He stands in the place of a parent to them. The parent has for the time delegated to him a portion of his great trust, that trust committed to himself by the Creator. The teacher then must have something of the feelings, of the interest of a parent. He must watch for the spiritual improvement of those who thus become, for the time, his children. Not indeed that the parent could wholly delegate to another his own sacred office. He but assumes the teacher as an associate in it. Both must feel that tender love, both must make those constant efforts for the improvement of their young charge, which the poet's comparison illustrates.

And that parental care will display itself in various ways. The teacher, full of the spirit of his office, will be ingenious in finding means to gain the attention and influence the hearts of the young. He may avail himself of forms, but if he sees that he can do more good in some way which is not in the form, he will feel at liberty to pursue it. He will, like the bird, try "each fond allurement." Now, he will lead the children, by the contemplation of nature, to contemplate Him by whose goodness and wisdom nature was rendered so rich in beauty; now he will lead them to the scenes of God's dealings with his chosen people; now again to the feet of the Saviour, the friend of children; now he will illustrate some moral lesson, now enforce some great religious truth. He will carefully prepare himself to meet his class, in order that the exercise may always be to them one of interest. If he finds them unprepared with their lessons, he may regret it, but he will not suffer the occasion to be, therefore, lost. *He* will be prepared, and will impart to them of the treasures he has laid up for them.

But in all his instructions, however varied, he will keep in view the great object. The object of the parent bird is "to tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies;" and such is the object of the teacher. He is to lead these children towards heaven. He is not merely to give knowledge, — not merely to entertain them, — though these are means of which he must avail himself; but all his efforts point heavenwards. His desire is for the salvation of his young charge; for their salvation from the evil that is in the world, for their acceptance with God, for their final blessedness. Keeping this object in view, he will have the right spirit, and the right spirit will make all else right. Deficiencies of education and errors of judgment will be comparatively harmless, if his heart is filled with the right spirit, — a pure, fervent love of his pupils, and a desire to secure their everlasting happiness. Still, this spirit itself will prompt him to avail himself of the most judicious means; he will, as before indicated, "try each art," for the attainment of the one great end in view.

The good pastor, in Goldsmith's comparison, is said to "reprove each dull delay." The teacher too will be the reprover of all wrong in his pupils. He will strive to gain their confidence; and when they have opened to him their

young hearts, he will point out to them, with the gentle frankness of true friendship, the faults they should eradicate, and tell them of the temptations they must subdue. There is scope here for all the united wisdom, zeal and love of the teacher; and if these be united, the happiest results may follow.

Yet the faithful monitor will not be found a harsh censurer. He will still be considerate and kind. His duty is to "allure to brighter worlds," and he will avoid rendering religion repulsive to the young by veiling it in unnatural gloom. No. While he points to them the glorious banquet of innocent enjoyment, which their heavenly Father has prepared for them here, he will tell them that the same kind Father has prepared enjoyment still more glorious in a brighter world than this. He will teach them in youth, and from youth upward, to look to God as their Friend, to trust in him and love him with their whole hearts.

One thing remains. The teacher must "lead the way" where he would have his pupils tread. His example must illustrate his precepts; otherwise they will fall powerless from his lips. The children must know that he is a good, a pure, peaceable and religious man, one respected by himself and by others. Only in a true heart can the right spirit dwell; and that spirit alone can prompt those instructions which shall be available for the highest good of the young. Let, then, the teacher seek, for himself, the way of light and peace; then having found it, the blessing of God will be with him in his endeavors to lead the steps of others therein.

Rev. Mr. Briggs, of Plymouth, apologized for speaking, as he had no thought of doing so when he entered the church without preparation. But his excuse was that he had been asked to say a word or two. What he had to say was suggested to him by the statement in the Report, in regard to the address from the Sunday schools in England on the subject of peace. It occurred to him to remark, that in order to make the teaching of the precepts of Jesus successful, it must be specific. Each particular sin must be dealt with directly. In regard to this question of war, Christ's doctrine must be specifically applied, and the child distinctly taught that the Christian must not fight at all. He thought this had not been done as it should be done. He remembered a few years

since that there was present at this anniversary a Sunday school from the ship of war Ohio. He remembered that he looked upon that school with mingled feelings. He was glad there was such a school on board that ship; but he thought if the Sunday school was what it ought to be, that school would never again return to the ship Ohio.

When he was disposed to despond, he looked to this institution, and hope revived. You might, by stopping the springs on the mountains, or diverting the little rills, in time drain the cataract; you might quench the just kindling fire with a drop of water; so by speaking the true Christian word to the young, you might produce all good results. But who could speak that word? Only he who had learned it; only he who had it in his own heart.

Elder Harvey, from Pennsylvania, briefly expressed his interest in the Sunday school. He had once been a scholar. Whilst life lasted he could not forget the impression made on him as a Sunday school scholar. He looked to see the good seed planted in this institution, which was to save, not only civil government, but also the church. He would say to all,— encourage the Sunday school. He would say to those engaged in them, teach the young idea how to shoot, and shoot aright; then it will bud and blossom and bear fruit in the light of a Saviour's love.

Rev. J. W. Thompson, of Salem, said, — I have been requested to occupy a few moments of the time of this meeting with some remarks on *the qualifications of Sunday school teachers.*

It is easier to state the qualifications than to be an example of a good Sunday school teacher, as it is easier always to comprehend our duty than to do it. I suppose that teachers may be benefited by occasions like this, if no more is done than to stir up their minds by putting them in remembrance of the things which they already know, — if only the familiar duties of their vocation, (which imply their qualifications,) are brought before them, by a living voice, with the sympathy and approval of the assembly. In the few observations I shall submit, I aim at no more than this, and shall be more than satisfied if in this I succeed.

The first qualification of a Sunday school teacher to which I would direct your attention, is a good understanding, or

good common sense. This I deem indispensable. I apprehend that it has been too much overlooked in our schools. I suspect that many have regarded it as a minor qualification, which might be safely dispensed with, provided certain other excellent gifts were not wanting. But in my judgment it is of the first consequence. It is essential as a ground of confidence, on the part both of parents and children, towards the teacher; and you know, sir, what all must see, that a teacher can do little good if this confidence be wanting. It is essential in the interpretation of scripture, and in the application of truth, from whatever sources derived, to children's minds and hearts. It is an extremely delicate and difficult duty which the teacher performs. Of several interpretations of a passage of scripture, for example, he has to choose that which he shall present to his pupils, that it may pass into their treasured thoughts and be transmitted into spiritual life. This requires *good sense.* From the wide range of topics contained in the Bible and the various text-books of the school, he has to select, from time to time, those which are best suited to childhood and youth in general, or to the particular class of children under his special care. This requires *good sense.* Of the numberless questions which inquisitive children love to propose to those who have their confidence, he has to decide which can be answered at all, and of these, how many may be answered so as both to satisfy and instruct the questioner. This requires good sense. He has often to determine what stimulus shall be applied to his class, — what means he shall employ to awaken in them a stronger interest in the objects of the school, — and in many cases, too, how he may reach the parents and induce them to lend a more watchful and efficient coöperation. And this requires *good sense.* I place this, then, foremost among the qualifications of a Sabbath school teacher, — not highest, but first, — good sense; not extraordinary brilliancy, nor great learning, but *good common sense.* And I wish there were more of it, Mr. President, not only in Sabbath school teachers, but in teachers who commonly occupy a higher place than they, on Sundays.

In the next place, I think a love of the study of moral and religious subjects an important qualification. There is a great difference in this respect amongst those in a congregation who might be thought of for the office of teacher. If I am not mistaken, teachers are frequently appointed who have

no taste for serious reading, no habits for serious thinking no fondness at all for those inquiries and investigations into the deep things of the Divine Spirit, the foundation for which it is intended should be laid in the Sabbath school. With these, the Bible is not a favorite book, moral and religious truth is not sought and loved by them, nor is the hand-writing of God recognized in the elder scripture, the sublime lessons of which they are expected to impress upon the youthful minds placed under their charge. They prefer light reading to the deep science of the soul, — questions of ephemeral interest, — questions relating to the most superficial concerns of life, to those which refer to eternal realities, great principles, heavenly revelations, man's destiny. Now, finding little or no satisfaction themselves in the studies which they attempt to direct, how is it possible that they should inspire a love of them, or keep it alive where it exists, in their pupils? How is it possible that they should form in them a moral taste of which they know nothing themselves but by hearsay or conjecture? They cannot do it. They must lead their pupils into the studies of religion by the silent but alluring influence of their own example. So it is in other studies; so it must be preëminently in those which relate to religious truth and the formation of character.

In the next place, teachers must not only be interested in studies relating to religion, but they should be religious, — in the highest sense of the word, — *religious*. It is necessary that they shall have felt moving in their souls the powers of the world to come. It is necessary that they shall have fathomed the meaning of devotion and been sanctified through the efficacy of prayer. It is necessary that they should know, by true heart-experience, what a calm, cheerful, trustful faith is, — the peace and joy of believing. Of that self-denying patience which bears with human weakness and folly and sin, and never grows weary in efforts to remove them; of that all-controlling love of God which is ready to sacrifice every thing for truth, for duty, for humanity, — deep as the soul, high as heaven; of these they should understand the full import, feel a full blessedness. The two great commandments should be engraven, not only upon their hearts, but also upon the palms of their hands, so that their daily labor, while it sends incense to heaven, shall diffuse blessings to men. And this is but saying, in other words, that they should be Christians,

familiar with the principles, alive with the spirit, and zealous to extend the influence of Christianity. With the dogmas of the sects they have little concern; with the great ideas and sentiments of Christianity, they should be filled. With these ideas and sentiments living and burning within them, their influence exerted in wisdom, though unseen, may be immeasurable. And here, let me say, that there is, and for some time has been unfolding, a new form of the religious life. Formerly that class of ideas and sentiments which relates to God, and that alone, constituted the religion of men, and that religion was expressed outwardly in innumerable signs and modes of worship. Worship was then the form of the religious life. Sacrifice, a solemn ceremonial; — the music of psalms, audible prayers, were its chief features. This is true of all the ancient religions. It is not true of Christianity, as men are just now beginning to see. Another class of ideas and sentiments has come up, under the fostering influence of the gospel, intimately connected with the former as man is intimately connected with God, bearing upon the relations of men to one another throughout the whole race; and these are giving a new and grander form to the religious life. Religion now manifests itself, not only in the devout worship of God, but in the quick sense and stern voice of justice; not only in penitent confessions, but in the tender compassions of humanity; not only in the music of hymns to the eternal Father, but in the sweet melody of mercy to his beloved though wicked and suffering children!

The old religions, — as far as they recognized the relations of men to one another at all, — sought to restrict their sympathies and friendly regards within certain narrow limits, to bound them as their Provinces or States were bounded. But now, they are entirely unconfined. Whatever enclosures human folly or human policy may have chosen to erect around them, Christian affection overleaps them all. The eye of the Christian beholds in every man, whatever his political condition, — in every man, bond or free, — in every man, Saxon or Castilian, — a child of God and a brother.

This, Mr. President, is the form of the religious life, which I wish to behold in our teachers, and which I must regard as one of the essential qualifications.

Mr. Holland, of Rochester, N. Y., said a few words of the gratitude of distant Sunday schools for the interest taken in them by this Society.

The *President* exhorted all to renew their feelings of responsibility to this great and good cause, — the Sunday School, — and to fix deeper their resolutions of fidelity. The closing hymn was then sung, and the meeting was dismissed.

In giving an account of this meeting, one of our leading daily papers thus expresses its opinion.

The Report having been accepted without a dissenting voice, very able and eloquent addresses were made by Rev. Messrs. Bulfinch, of Nashua, N. H.; George W. Briggs, of Plymouth; James W. Thompson, of Salem; and Elder J. J. Harvey, of Pennsylvania, a minister of the Christian connection. The qualifications of teachers formed the chief topic of discussion. We do not recollect that we have ever heard speaking, on a similar occasion, of a character so uniformly eloquent and beautiful. Generally, some one falls below the level, and mars the harmony by his jarring sounds; but it was far otherwise, in this instance, — the remarks of all the speakers being of a highly eloquent description. Between the addresses, several hymns were sung, by a selected choir of children connected with the Sunday schools in our city. It required no great stretch of imagination, to believe of their pure voices, what the poet has so beautifully said, when he tells us, that the voice of the little child, singing "Praise God," by her cottage-door, rose high above the music of the seraphic choir and the sound of the celestial harp, and filled all the courts of heaven with its simple harmony. The meeting broke up at a late hour, after some eloquent remarks from the President — all, we doubt not, well satisfied with what they had heard.

BOOKS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

HYMN AND SERVICE BOOK,

BY HON. S. C. PHILLIPS.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMN BOOK, WITH DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES,

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THE

NINETEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-SIXTH OF MAY, 1847.

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SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS.

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1847.

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1847.

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*** As Schools or Societies may be desirous of contributing to the funds of the Agency, to aid in visiting their own and other schools, and at the same time to testify their affection and regard for their pastor or superintendent, the following article from the Constitution of the Society is subjoined:

ART. 12. The sum of Ten Dollars, paid into the treasury, by, or for, any one person, shall constitute him a Life Member of the Society.

BOOKS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

LIVERMORE'S COMMENTARIES ON THE GOSPELS, AND THE ACTS. 3 Vol.
WARE'S LIFE OF THE SAVIOUR.
WARE ON THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.
GREENWOOD'S LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.
MILMAN'S HISTORY OF THE JEWS.
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THE SAVIOUR'S LIFE, Written expressly for Children and Youth. By Rev. Edwin Chapman of England.

REPORT.

In presenting the nineteenth annual Report of the Sunday School Society, we would piously recognize the blessing of God, during the past year, on intelligent Sunday School Teachers, on devoted Clergymen and active Agents. Our sufficiency hath been of God — to Him be glory.

By the care and fidelity of my excellent predecessors, the statistics of the Sabbath Schools, throughout our denomination, have been given in such detail as to render a repetition unnecessary.

The Agency of the Society, as reported by its Chairman, has been continued through the past year with more than its usual amount of labor and success. At the present time it numbers on its list of agents, ten; but in consequence of feeble health, or private engagements, a few only of the number have been able to devote much time to the discharge of its duties. Nevertheless, they have been enabled to accept of every invitation received, and in a single case only has a disappointment occurred by any failure on their part to attend.

They have visited, during the year, schools in South Carolina, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts.

The number of towns to which they have gone is .	95
The number of schools visited and addressed is .	107
The number of teachers connected with these schools was	2,205

The number of pupils, ... 11,640
The number of written and oral addresses and sermons delivered to parents, teachers and pupils, . 140
The number of persons addressed, ... 19,500
The number of miles travelled, ... 3,620

These visits and addresses much exceed in number those of the previous year. The reports, with scarcely an exception, speak favorably of the condition and prospects of all the schools visited. Some of them were found small in their numbers, but active and useful in their labors. A few are represented as only in a fair condition. In these places, public prosperity is absorbing too much the vital energies of those who should bestow a larger portion of their time on their own and the spiritual improvement of others. But for the most part, it has been a gladdening sight to find so large a number of schools cherished and sustained with so much zeal and ability.

Our Agent who visited the school in Charleston, S. C., says, "I explained to the school the relation in which their school stood to ours in New England — the common interest which we all should feel — the sympathy we wished to excite, and the union and harmony that should characterize all Christians, particularly those of our denomination. The school listened with deep interest to what was said to them, and the superintendent appeared gratified to learn that there was sympathy felt for their school by those engaged in the same work at the North. Dr. Gilman was much gratified with my visit, and particularly with its official character. The Doctor appears like a saint, and Mrs. Gilman as an angel of mercy. She has established several Sabbath Schools among the colored people, all of whom she regards with the deepest interest."

During the year, Rev. Mr. Gray, one of the agents, has delivered a course of six lectures to the teachers of Sunday

Schools, in the vestry of the Bulfinch Street Church, which were open to the public. They were well attended, and, we believe, highly acceptable and profitable.

Conventions, or meetings of the County Associations, have been held as usual in different parts of this Commonwealth, and in other States, at most of which one or more of the Agents has been present. An excellent spirit seemed to pervade them all. They are useful in many ways, and serve to infuse into all the schools connected with them a large share of interest and efficiency. Rev. Mr. Muzzey, who has attended both the semi-annual meetings of the Middlesex Sunday School Society, reports that they are steadily "increasing in interest."

During the year, the Agents have distributed on their various visits, and as they had opportunity, to more distant parts of the country, east and west, south and north, upwards of eight thousand of their Juvenile Tracts, comprising 65,600 pages. A larger edition than usual (2,500) of the Society's Annual Report, has also been published and widely distributed. Packages of these have been sent to most of the schools connected with Unitarian Societies throughout the country. They propose in the coming year to increase the number of their Juvenile Tracts, and to add a suitable one for the use and benefit of Teachers. A large edition of the latter is now in the press, and through the Agency, and by other means, they hope to obtain for it a free and wide circulation. Library books and Manuals have been supplied to a few destitute schools. With more funds at their command, the usefulness of the Society in this direction might be much enlarged; they would solicit specific donations for this purpose.

By the contribution of the necessary sum, nine persons, the past year, have been made Life Members of the Society, — namely, Rev. F. W. Holland, Rochester, N. Y.; Mr. A. S.

Lincoln, Templeton, Mass.; W. P. Jarvis, Esq., South Congregational School, Boston; James Whiting, Esq., Church of the Disciples, Boston; Rev. J. L. Stone, Brewster; Geo. W. Bourne, Esq., Kennebunk, Me.; Mr. W. R. Alger, by the Broadway School, South Boston, and the Brattle Square School; and Mr. George Woodman, of the Church of the Divine Unity, New York. The school at Northfield has, during the year, made a contribution to the funds of the Agency of $6.00. The expenditures during the year have exceeded the income, in the sum of $49.54.

They add a list of the towns and schools, alphabetically arranged, which have been visited and addressed since their last report; namely,

In Boston — the Howard Sunday School (thrice); Brattle Street; West Boston; Bulfinch Street; Hancock; Warren Street; Twelfth Congregational; Chauncey Place; Mr. Fox's, and East Boston (twice). The school in Boylston (twice); Brighton (twice — Middlesex Sunday School Society); Billerica (Middlesex Sunday School Society); Bolton; Bernardston; Brooklyn, N. Y.; Brookline, Mass.; Bridgewater (twice); Cambridge; Charleston, S. C.; Charlestown, Mass.; Cohasset; Calais, Me.; Cabotville; Dorchester; Dover; Dublin, N. H. (twice); East Bridgewater (twice); Eastport, Me.; East Cambridge; Hingham; Haverhill; Keene, N. H.; Kennebunk, Me. (twice); Kingston; Littleton (twice); Lunenburg (twice); Lancaster; Leominster; Lowell; Lynn; Montague (twice); Mansfield (twice); Mendon (twice); Marlboro' (twice); Marshfield; Northfield (twice); Northboro'; North Beverly; Needham; Northampton; Nashua, N. H.; Pembroke; Petersham; Providence, R. I.; Portsmouth, N. H.; Plymouth; Peterborough, N. H.; Quincy (twice); Rowe; Richfield, N. Y.; Sharon; Somerville; Stow (twice); Salem; South Brookfield; Saco, Me.; Shirley; Taunton; Uxbridge;

Wayland; Wilton, N. H.; Westford; West Roxbury; West Cambridge.

Mr. Channing has made 33 of the above visits, in connection with his agency of the A. U. A.; Mr. Pray, 25; Rev. C. Brooks, 21; Mr. Bangs, 9; Rev. Mr. Gray, 9; Rev. Mr. Muzzey, 6; Rev. Mr. Waterston, 2; J. W. Andrew, Esq., 2; and R. W. Bayley, Esq., 1.

The Agents are encouraged to a perseverance in their labors by the uniform kindness and sympathy which have attended and followed all their efforts. They feel a gratitude in this respect, which they want words adequately to express.

At no time have Sabbath Schools been more useful, and at no time in this country have they been so important to the Republic and the Church as now.

We would not dwell at this time on the reasons for our contentment, many though they be, particularly in our own denomination, but would take the unusual course of clustering together the prominent facts which show our dissatisfaction with the present moral condition of our community; and in this not referring exclusively to our own denomination, but to all denominations, and to all parts of the land. I must bespeak your candor for the mode in which I treat my theme, for it is so arranged that I may be accused of over-coloring the picture. I trust, however, that you will observe that the statements are carefully guarded, and that nothing is put down which some of us do not know to be true. If, in directing your eyes to the dense cloud that hangs over us, that cloud should seem remarkably deep and dark, I ask you to remember that there is a sun above it, that gives it a silvery lining. Oh, that Heaven "would turn that silvery lining round upon our night!"

A glance at the condition of our community will reveal to us the need of new, systematic, and united action.

There are one million and a half of children in the United States who attend no school; and recently it has been published, that in Boston there are nine thousand children, between the ages of 4 and 16, in the same deplorable condition. This last is an over-statement, but if only one half of the number be without any instruction, it is enough to make the stones cry out, *Shame!*

Do you ask what we are going to do with these children? That is not the question. The question is, What are *they* going to do with *us?* The two prominent things before them are the prison and the ballot-box — each, perhaps, regarded by them as a special inheritance.

If such be the intellectual dearth, what, think you, must be the moral? When we know of this vast number of children who are without the fostering care of intellectual or moral culture; — when we hear Sunday School Teachers say, that of those who do attend Sunday School, a large proportion are neglected at home; when we see even Christian parents thus indifferent to the spiritual welfare of their children, and resigning to Sunday School Teachers the religious instruction which they themselves are sacredly bound to impart; — when we see that decay of reverence which is everywhere, though not always justly, complained of, so that we seem now-a-days to have no children, they so spring, in their manners, from the cradle to manhood; — when we consider that the common schools bring their steady force to bear on the intellect mainly, and in being forbidden to teach the doctrines of any particular sect, often teach no more of morality than pertains to school ambition, or outward decorum; — when the invaluable labors of the clergyman are so often interrupted by those new ideas of the ministerial office, which have caused such destructive reduction of salaries, or such an instability in the office, that in many parishes through the country, the pulpit is left vacant

for long periods, or the pastor is only a temporary sojourner among the flock, not remaining long enough to gather the lambs in his arms, or go through with any system of religious training; — when bad books have so multiplied that even shallowness has deepened into a mighty torrent; when French novels come seething from the heads of wanton, hireling atheists, to do, in angel dresses, the work that Satan did in Paradise; — when secret printing-presses are flooding the by-paths with licentious pictures, and some irresponsible newspapers are doing a like moral wrong in another way; — when, in many, we see such a want of religious courage and independence, and in the community such a want of an enlightened public conscience, as to render the *golden rule*, to some extent, a nullity; — when we look at the low state of morals, as sometimes shown in trade; and the lower still, as often shown in politics; and the lowest of all, as always paraded in war; — when we see man basely trampled on by man; — when we find the love of money elevated, by example, into a doctrine, and preached from father to son as a cardinal virtue, and find Mammon's golden wand threatening to strike this land with spiritual impotency; — when selfishness, in many quarters, is reduced to a science, and men can apply it in an instant, to any case, with mathematical accuracy; — when licentiousness is fevering the blood, and intemperance is maddening the brain of the virtuous youth who come from the country into the cities, and are there left unprotected by the conservative influence of home, and who form there "confederacies in vice and leagues in pleasure," and who are ready to combine in numbers to set at nought, in public assemblies, the constitutional inviolability of the civil law; — when theatres are multiplied with ominous rapidity; — when show, and pride and idleness are pushing aside old-fashioned industry, economy and decorum; — when foreign influences, too, are

corrupting us; — when swarms of European paupers are coming, like the locusts of Egypt, to spread moral desolation in their path; — when our houses of correction are filling more and more with boys, and our prisons with young men, and twelve per cent. of all criminal convictions are among those under 18 years of age; — when our criminal courts send out statements of youthful corruption which stagger belief, and our city missions take the guage and dimensions of wickedness which they dare not publish; — when night after night the firemen are called out to extinguish flames kindled, as we have reason to fear, by the hands of youthful incendiaries; — when Christian humanity, too, is at so low an ebb among us, that a thousand men may be found ready to enlist in the army, where one can be persuaded to join a peace society; — when the government of a nation calling itself Christian, can be found to sanction an aggressive war on a sister republic, and Christian bells on Christian churches, instead of tolling as at a funeral over the dead, are perverted in their use to ring out a riotous joy over the purposely-inflicted miseries of God's children, thus showing man's exultation over the Prince of Peace and the Gospel of Love; and when he who has killed the most of his fellow-men, is hailed by many as having earned by such means a right to the highest civil office in the world; — when, turning in vain to find comfort in another direction, we encounter not less prophetic signs from the arena of theological warfare; — when we see new movements projected by alliances among Christian sects; — when false doctrine is raising its trumpet tones to drown the still small voice of reason and of truth; — when a spirit of intolerant uncharitableness in some quarters, is curdling the milk of human kindness; — when increasing numbers in this country are gaining influence by intellectual development, unaccompanied by moral restraint — men who dare to do any thing — men who

pervert every divine endowment — who take Heaven's own fire to burn down Heaven's own altars — men who call themselves philosophers, and yet divorce science and Christianity; whose ingenuity weakens the power of Christian truth, and who, baptizing their own passions with the name of religion, scruple not to erase from the sacred text the emphatic words, "Thus saith the Lord": — we say when such facts as these stare us in the face every day, and we hear the work of moral destruction going on busily around us, we ask, *if something should not be* DONE? Is it not high time to awake out of sleep? Is there not some reserved power which we can bring to bear on this accumulating evil? We answer, Yes; such forces undoubtedly do exist; but are they not still feeble or latent? I have watched for them in Europe and the United States, till my eyes are strained. In England the number of criminal commitments in one year, of both sexes, was 53,271, and out of these 51,048 had received no moral or religious instruction! and Chief-Justice Tindall tells Parliament that where religious training was omitted there pauperism and crime were the inevitable consequence. Like causes here are beginning to produce like effects; and many years will not pass before we shall see most prophetic developments. Every American who resides long in Europe, and looks closely at the working of our systems in the United States, must come to the conclusion which President Everett so well expresses in his inaugural address. "I cannot," says he, "subdue the feeling, that our modern Christendom, with all its professions and in all its communions, is sinking into practical heathenism, which needs a great work — I had almost said, a new dispensation — of reform, scarcely less than the decrepid paganisms of Greece and Rome. Christians as we are, we worship, in America and in Europe, in the city and in the field, on the Exchange and in the Senate, and, must

I not add, in the academy and the church, some gods as bad as those of the Pantheon. In individual and national earnestness, in true moral heroism, and in enlightened spirituality, unalloyed by mysticism, the age in which we live is making, I fear, little progress; but rather, perhaps, with all its splendid attainments in science and art, is plunging deeper into the sordid worship" of wealth. This is a description after wide experience, and an inference after profound thought.

Mr. Macaulay, in a recent speech before the House of Commons in London, on the subject of education, speaks of the terrible agency of the uninstructed among the lower classes; and to depict the extent of their degradation and violence, he calls them "*heathens* in the midst of Christianity, *savages* in the midst of civilization."

How can these disastrous realities in society be changed to those of truth, holiness, and God?

This is the most momentous question that the nineteenth century can ask. The answer to it, I apprehend, is this: — By the implantation of moral principle, the establishment of evangelical faith, and the enthronement of divine love in the souls of those who are rising from childhood to give form and pressure to the coming age.

How can this work be done? Will it be done by parents? No; for it is said that more than half, even of those who come to the Sunday School, are neglected at home. Will it be done by the common schools? No; for the laws forbid their teaching the peculiar doctrines of any sect. Will it be done by the pulpit? No; for the clergyman cannot preach to children often, and the pulpit is not the best place for juvenile instruction. Now if parents *do* not religiously instruct their children; if the common schools *have* not, and if the pulpit *cannot*, I ask, in the name of humanity, where is the spiritual culture of the rising generation to come from? Where but

from the SUNDAY SCHOOL? Driven in this manner from every other place, our hope takes refuge in the Sunday School — Heaven's primary school — the nursery of the church. Yes, — through the blessing of God, the Sunday School, and, we should add, parental agency, may meet the crisis. They are our trust. If these divine agencies be faithful to their sacred missions, they may all but work miracles; they can turn this barren waste into a fruitful field, and this Canaan that we love into a garden of the Lord.

In grouping together so many causes of dissatisfaction with the present religious condition of our community, I trust my aim will not be misinterpreted. Progress for good is not denied; but there are open and latent reasons for alarm. Nevertheless we have reserved powers, and we take courage. Dark though the cloud be which hangs over us, "hope plays round its edges, to tinge them with gold."

We now turn to ask, what we, as Unitarians, as pioneers in the great movements of reform, *can* do and *should* do towards arresting these evils, and erecting in their place a public Christian conscience, and a new order of life?

We answer — teach to all the rising generation, CHRISTIANITY, the whole of Christianity, and nothing but Christianity. This is the power of God unto salvation — the salvation of the American Republic and the American Church — the only power adequate to the crisis. The leaven of regenerating truth, which alone can leaven the entire mass, is that which must be hidden in the hearts of the children. Any thing short of this reaches not the fountain.

We therefore say next, that all our youth should be taught systematically the truth as it is in Jesus. Yes, — *systematically;* and this brings us to the topic we are anxious to discuss in the too brief space remaining of this report; namely, that the history, geography, evidences, ethics, and doctrines

of the New Testament should be taught systematically, according to a natural and luminous method; and that text-books and catechisms should be prepared accordingly. The catechisms which have been prepared by Unitarians, and which aim at strict consecutiveness in teaching, are to be specially commended; but, if a Committee could take the whole subject in hand, and properly prepare a new and extended work, on the plan we propose, we should hail it as second only in value to a perfect translation of the New Testament.

We would limit our remaining remarks to the importance of teaching all the Christian *doctrines* in their order, simplicity and power.

Christianity receives the infant from the hands of its Creator, pronounces upon it a benediction, saying, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." It would then keep its pupil *in* the Kingdom, develop all its powers in their natural order, proper time and due proportion, thus putting it in harmony with all the works of God and the teachings of Providence; and, having carried it unstained through the trials of earth, return it in peace, an educated child, to its Father in Heaven.

The great aim is the sanctification of the heart by piety and holiness; or, in other words, to make each soul *one* with Christ *as* he is one with the Father. The nearest approach to this highest of all results is gained by teaching the doctrines which Christ taught, *omitting no one*. All the doctrines of Christ are essential to vital Christianity. Those doctrines have an inseparable fellowship with the living system of divine truth, and therefore ought to be made to tell as soon as possible on the heart of childhood; it always being understood that doctrines are to be imparted to children only so far as they can comprehend them. If Heaven's seal be pressed on fresh and plastic childhood, the signatures will be legible through life.

Doctrines are the fundamental principles in any system. They are to any system what the bones are to the human body — they give it form and strength. If we would teach the New Testament, we must teach its doctrines, for they are *it.* The doctrines of the Gospel are the central truths of the Gospel. Christ's mission was to teach them. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the *truth.*" Again he says, "Sanctify them through thy *truth*; thy word is truth." If we should take out of the New Testament the peculiar doctrines of Christ, what would be left there to teach? The doctrines bear the relation to the precepts that the cause does to the effect. Did not Christ's peculiar life flow, as a natural consequence, from his peculiar doctrines? So let every Christian's life flow by the same rule. But, if a Christian would have such a life, he must have *Christ's reasons for such a life;* that is, he must comprehend the principles of a true theology. The more clearly Christian doctrines are seen by a child, the more readily does the mind see the practical inferences, and the stronger, therefore, is the motive to obedience.

For example; if we would teach a child that he must love God, we must first explain to that child the great central principle of theology; namely, the parental character of God; and thus convince the young mind that our teaching is based upon fact, and will lead to all good. So with all other teaching. All religious feeling, action and administration, are founded on certain facts, principles, or dogmas, which are believed to be true. The doctrines of Christianity are, therefore, the inspiration of our religious sentiments, the source of our mental joys, the foundation of our divine life, the strength of our earthly struggle, and the rock of our immortal hopes. To omit teaching the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, then, is to disregard its central power.

To show the fact, that out of the great principles of Christianity grow its particular ethical maxims, and that the true spiritual life comes from a true theology, and not from a false one, take this simple case: — Suppose a child to be understandingly taught that he is *totally* depraved, and wholly incapable of a pious thought or a virtuous action. Will such a persuasion, *well rooted in his mind*, be likely to inspire him with abundant zeal in good works? Would not such a belief be more likely to deaden, if not extinguish, his energies? On the other hand, if the child be convinced that he can think right and do right, think wrong and do wrong, and that he is free to choose which he pleases, does not *such* a faith leave the motives of piety and holiness active and genial upon his soul? A child feels free; and he must be taught as a free agent. He feels able to do good; and he must be taught upon the principle that he *is* able.

We say, therefore, that all the doctrines of Christianity should be taught *systematically*. It is certainly desirable that every person should have in his mind a well-defined view of all Christian doctrine, as it belongs together; *the same view that Christ had in his mind;* and, therefore, it is necessary to teach theology and religion systematically; as it is necessary in any other science. If there be not a natural consecutiveness in the instruction, there will be a disjointed, fragmentary, unimpressive collection of facts and ideas — "a mass of things, but nothing distinctly."

Can we teach Mathematics to a youth by beginning with the Differential Calculus, then skipping to Heights and Distances, then trying a hand at Barter, and next plunging into Algebraic Equations? Would not a wiser and shorter method be, to begin with the four fundamental principles, and the rule of three, and from these ascend gradually to higher problems and wider relations?

So in Metaphysics. Can you teach this science to a young mind by first calling it to decide whether all ideas are derived from sensation and reflection; or whence the idea of time originates; or what is a mixed mode; or what is an involuntary action? Would not a wiser and shorter method be to begin with some simple treatise on Logic, in which the requisite terms are clearly defined, and the art of using reason well is intelligibly explained?

So in the science of theology and religion. Can you teach a youth, as he should be taught, by first discoursing on justification by faith; then, on the next occasion, telling the story of Joseph or Robinson Crusoe; then a lecture on the Lord's Supper; next a homily on Adam's sin, and lastly the parable of the Prodigal Son? Can such a hap-hazard, zig-zag manner of teaching produce any thing but confusion in a well-regulated mind? Would not a wiser and shorter method be, to teach the young pupil that as he, and his brothers and sisters, have a wise and good father on earth, so all mankind have a wise and good Father in Heaven? The unity, power, wisdom and love of the Heavenly Parent might be illustrated from the stars, earth, plants, animals and man; and *then* how clearly would appear to the child's mind the *first* great law of the spiritual universe — the law that binds all creatures to their Creator; and as soon as this was seen, how clearly then would it follow, that the *first* great commandment of the spiritual universe *must* be none other than what it is — namely, "Thou shalt love this Heavenly Father with all thy heart."

The *second* great law of the spiritual universe — the law that binds together in one all the children of this common Father — could *then* be taught by the same natural and easy steps. Let the child be told, that as he, and his brothers and sisters, are bound together in one family under their earthly

father, so all mankind are bound together in one family under their Heavenly Father; and, as his earthly parents wish him and his brothers and sisters to love one another, so the Heavenly Parent wishes all his children to love each other; and that, therefore, the *second* great commandment of the spiritual universe *must* be none other than what Christ has declared it — "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

When God's relation to man, and man's relation to God and to his brother, have been thus unfolded — when the teacher has taken his stand in the child's mind, and often repeated these illustrations and precepts with simplicity and patience, the child is *then* in a position to take his next step in his religious education; namely, to understand that this Heavenly Parent did not think it beneath him to *instruct* the children whom he did not think it beneath him to *create;* and that, therefore, he gave them a revelation of his will — the natural continuation of the process of creation — and a proceeding most accordant with the heart of a good Parent. Inquisitive childhood would here immediately ask, what God said in that revelation? Here the answer would naturally bring in the history of his revelations, and especially that concerning the promised Messiah; then would follow a history of Christ's advent, his mission, character, labors, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension. After such a history would impressively follow, what Christ said, taught and established,—his doctrines, sanctions and promises. Here would come in a consideration of man's capacity to obey the precepts of God and of Christ; and this would introduce the subject of man considered as made upright after the image of God, placed in a state of probation, free to stand and free to fall, and the happy consequences flowing from the wise use of his liberty. Next would follow a consideration of man considered as a sinner, abusing his liberty; and here-

upon would come to view the scripture doctrines of repentance, divine grace, regeneration, pardon, acceptance, spiritual growth, confirmed holiness, hope, immortality, Heaven.

By no means would I call this catalogue of topics complete, or the series the best for all; I adduce it only as an example for illustrating what I think to be a demanded course of instruction for our Sunday Schools in future; leaving it to the better judgment of others to modify the modes as they find reason. But that systematic instruction, on a plan embracing several years, should henceforth mark our Sunday Schools, I am more and more persuaded.

We are sustained in this conclusion by the mature judgment of all other Christian sects. I know not a country in Europe, Catholic or Protestant, which does not particularly guard this vital point. Every sect has its system for indoctrinating its young members; and where Christianity is an enjoined part of common school instruction, there the law provides that any sect may take its children out of school during certain hours, and indoctrinate them separately, and have the rank of such pupils in these studies reported to the common school teacher, and noted in his record of merits. Even farther than this is their system carried. The catechumens *must* go through a series of lessons in dogmatic theology before they can be admitted to their "first communion;" and until they have done this they cannot be married. Thus secured, by all sorts of motives, justifiable and unjustifiable, is the great scheme of consecutive religious teaching; and the results aimed at are obtained, and could not be obtained in any other way. Look at the facts. Glance only at the Roman Catholic Church. How clearly all is expressed! How imperiously all is demanded! Turn to the English Episcopal Church. How carefully required is systematic instruction in all the dogmas of that communion! The same wise caution

is visible among the Lutherans; and to see the skill of the Calvinists we have only to name the Assembly's Catechism, which is one of the most eminent specimens of profound theological acumen ever published, and which, if it did its work, would, like a skilful sculptor, make a marble man. This catechism, taking the place of the Bible, has secured the continuance and growth of Calvinism in the world, by planting its impressive and methodical statements in the memories of the rising generation. If there were no proof but this, this alone would be sufficient to settle the question, that systematic instruction in doctrines is the way and *the only way* of giving them an immovable lodgement in the soul.

We, to our great loss, have neglected this scheme of progressive instruction, subjecting our children to be carried away with any wind of doctrine, especially if it happen to be a trade wind, setting agreeably towards any particular church. Many have left our schools and parishes, where no emphatic statement of doctrines is heard, and have gone where they can rest in something specific and stationary. Wherever a low state of religious knowledge exists, or where spiritual coldness chills any church, or we have fallen behind other sects, the cause, we think, is to be traced to the want of proper, intelligent, systematic instruction in the doctrines, duties, sanctions and promises of Christianity. Where ideas are connected by their natural relationships — as the harmonious doctrines of the gospel are — they hold a power and life in them by their association, which, isolated, they can never possess. The sooner this fact is apprehended, the better it will be for our churches. There may be light and beauty in the rays of the sun divided seven-fold, as in the prismatic spectrum, but those rays have *vital warmth* in them only when combined in the pure white beam that holds them all harmoniously mingled.

We repeat, then, teach the Gospel, the whole Gospel, and nothing but the Gospel; and *teach it systematically.*

God grant that parents and teachers, ministers and churches, may feel that they are the sent of Heaven, commissioned to put in motion those counteracting forces, which can arrest any further tendencies to infidelity, licentiousness and misrule. May God's grace sanctify and crown our labors. We long for the advent of a higher spiritual culture, a nobler, self-sacrificing life. We would hail in advance the coming of that "new dispensation of reform," the demand of humanity, the promise of freedom, the hope of the church.

"*Even so come, Lord Jesus! come quickly!*"

CHARLES BROOKS,
Corresponding Secretary.

Boston, May 26, 1847.

ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

The nineteenth anniversary of the Sunday School Society was observed on Wednesday evening, May 26th, at the Rev. Dr. Gannett's Church, in Federal Street. The house was early and densely filled. The President, Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, in the Chair. The meeting was opened with a most appropriate and impressive prayer by the venerable Dr. Kendall, of Plymouth. The Report, which precedes this account, was then read in part, by Rev. Charles Brooks, the Corresponding Secretary of the Society; after which the following questions were read from the Chair, and presented for general discussion: —

1. Must the primary truths of Christianity be implanted in the young mind by instruction, before we can reach the affections, and move the soul to the highest action?

2. How can the Scriptural idea of Christ be most clearly imparted to the pupil's mind?

3. How far should oral and textual instruction be separated? And what is the value of text-books and story-books in Sunday School instruction?

4. Do general lessons, or addresses, by the Superintendent or a stranger, promote the highest advancement of a Sunday School?

5. What, on the part of teachers and pupils, should be the home preparation for the Sunday School?

6. Are there not peculiarities in the present religious state of the community, which call for extraordinary efforts on the part of Sunday School Teachers?

Addresses were then made by J. G. CONGDON, Esq., of New Bedford, on the importance of home instruction — the fifth of the above questions; by Rev. EPHRAIM PEABODY, of Boston, on the first; by Rev. DR. NICHOLS, of Portland, on the same, urging repetition as the best means; by T. S. HARLOW, Esq., of Medford, on the second; by Rev. M. W. WILLIS, of Walpole, N. H., on the first; and a few words each from Rev. T. T. STONE, of Salem, and Rev. Mr. WATERSTON, of Boston. The meeting was brought to a close by a comprehensive review of all the remarks, by Hon. S. C. PHILLIPS, the President of the Society, and an earnest appeal on his part to the teachers, for renewed effort in the work of instructing the young.

The meeting, by general consent, was regarded as one of a most interesting and profitable character; and to which an additional charm was lent by the several pieces of music performed at intervals during the evening, by the choir connected with the Warren Street Chapel, under the direction of Rev. C. F. BARNARD.

THE

TWENTIETH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

THIRTY-FIRST OF MAY, 1848.

BOSTON:
SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS,
124 Washington St.

JOHN PUTNAM, PR., 81 CORNHILL.
1848.

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1848.

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* Deceased.

*** As Schools or Societies may be desirous of contributing to the funds of the Agency, to aid in visiting their own and other schools, and at the same time to testify their affection and regard for their pastor or superintendent, the following article from the Constitution of the Society is subjoined:

Art. 12. The Sum of Ten Dollars, paid into the treasury by, or for, any one person, shall constitute him a Life Member of the Society.

BOOKS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

LIVERMORE'S COMMENTARIES ON THE GOSPELS, AND THE ACTS. 3 Vols.
WARE'S LIFE OF THE SAVIOUR.
WARE ON THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.
GREENWOOD'S LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.
MILMAN'S HISTORY OF THE JEWS.
BULFINCH'S HOLY LAND AND ITS INHABITANTS.
ROBINSON'S DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE. (Calmet's.)
ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE.
THOUGHTS ON MORAL AND SPIRITUAL CULTURE. By Rev. R. C. Waterston.
HINTS TO SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS. By. Rev. T. B. Fox.
HISTORY OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS, AND OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG, FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES. By Lewis G. Pray.
SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER'S GUIDE. By Rev. A. B. Muzzey.

MANUALS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

FIRST BOOK FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS. Channing's Catechism.
CARPENTER'S CATECHISM.
THE WORCESTER ASSOCIATION'S CATECHISM. 12th edition.
CHILD'S BOOK ON THE SOUL. By Rev. T. H. Gallaudet.
CARTEE'S QUESTIONS ON THE NEW TESTAMENT. Parts 1 and 2.
ALLEN'S QUESTIONS ON THE FOUR EVANGELISTS AND THE ACTS. Parts 1, 2, and 3.
LESSONS FROM THE GOSPELS, Comprising the Life of the Saviour.
MINISTRY OF CHRIST. By Rev. T. B. Fox.
THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. By the same.
LESSONS ON THE PARABLES. By Rev. F. D. Huntington.
SCRIPTURE CATECHISM OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION. By Rev. E. Peabody.
SCRIPTURE TRUTHS, in Questions and Answers.
ALLEN'S QUESTIONS ON GENESIS.
BIBLE BIOGRAPHY. Old and New Testaments.
ABSTRACT OF SACRED HISTORY.
NICHOLS'S NATURAL THEOLOGY.
HYMN AND SERVICE BOOK. By Hon. S. C. Phillips.
SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMN BOOK. With Devotional Exercises. By Lewis G. Pray.
CHAPEL HYMN BOOK, Comprising Hymns suited for Sunday Schools and Social Religious Meetings.
THE SAVIOUR'S LIFE, Written expressly for Children and Youth. By Rev. Edwin Chapman of England.
THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES, their Origin, Peculiarities and Transmission. By Rev. H. A. Miles.

REPORT.

Twenty years have passed away since this Society was organized. The first feeling of our hearts is that of gratitude to God for his smile upon our labors. Then comes the inquiry;—Have these labors brought the anticipated results? We fear they have not: And why have they not? An answer to this question will bring before us some topics of the deepest concern.

What is the state of feeling in this country respecting the moral and religious education of the young? If we include the thirty states of this union the answer would be nearly this: that the ideas on the moral and religious education of the young are as near to nothing at all, as can well be described. Take us as a whole nation, these ideas are as faint, transitory and indefinable as fire-fly gleamings in a meadow-mist. They are so near to absolute vacuity, that nothing possitive can be predicated of them. In some parts of the country there is a general impression that the Christian culture of the young is desirable; but, there are in such places no fixed modes for securing it. Within a comparatively small territory the need and value of such culture is vividly recognized and faithfully promoted. Our denomination has always held it of paramount importance; because we have always maintained that, by it, a child may grow up a Christian.

Ample proof of the three conditions of society just named, may be found by examining the annual messages of the Governors of our several states; by the Reports of the Secretary of the Board of Education and the common school statistics through the country, as well as by the records of Sunday School Societies.

Is it not one of the offices of this Sunday School Society to enlighten and correct public opinion on the subject of spiritual culture? If we can make the community feel its spiritual wants, and then can suggest the remedial topics and the practical modes of culture, we shall have done our greatest work.

If religious education, even in the most favored parts of the country, be not what is required either by the advanced condition of society in the nineteenth century, or by the spiritual susceptibilities of the human soul, or by the express requisition of God's holy word; the inquiry comes:—*Where is the defect? and what is the remedy?* These two questions the report proposes to answer in that *very* brief way, which alone is tolerated during Anniversary Week.

The great deficiency in spiritual culture has arisen mainly out of the prevalent modes of general education; and the signal defect here has been the almost exclusive culture of the *intellect.* By the *intellect* I mean that part of our mental constitution by which we study mathematics, invent machines and trace the relationship of abstract ideas; wholly disconnected with conscience. The intellect, thus defined, is neutral. It stands between the passions and the conscience; and will as readily enlist to serve under the sovereignty of the passions as under the sovereignty of conscience. Now I say, that the prevalent modes

of education tend to enlist the intellect under the passions and not under the conscience. This is the great defect in the American theories of education; and a greater defect could hardly exist. While in the kingdom of Prussia it is a statute-law, that every child in the public schools *shall* receive moral and religious instruction; in America it is the statute-law of usage, at least through many parts of the country, that no child shall be religiously instructed in the public schools. Moral and spiritual instruction being thus shut out, the public schools are consequently driven to concentrate all their forces on the *intellect*, and they concentrate them on this one faculty with an intensity and zeal wholly disproportioned to its relative importance. The natural consequence is, that our community is full of *intellectual* expansion, unaccompanied by corresponding *moral* developments. We have men who can reason like angels, while at the same moment they can feel like devils. These are the men who give us so much trouble in parishes, in towns, in cities, in states, in the nation; men, whose intellect has been nourished and stimulated by every forcing process that could be brought to bear upon it, while conscience has been kept comparatively asleep. These are the men who are ready for any thing that promises them either money, or office, or fame. They will advocate either side of any question, provided their plans can triumph. All of them have their price. They carry about with them a certain amount of negotiable villany, and they are ready to become philanthropists, incendiaries, or demagogues, just as the wind happens to suit the occasion. Unmoved by moral motives, unchecked by moral restraints and callous to moral affections, they are beyond the

reach of all ordinary moral suasion. To attempt to control them with such religious principle, would be trying "to fetter strong madness with a silken thread." But, without taking such extreme cases, we say that our community is full of men, whose moral developments are immeasurably inferior to their intellectual; and we further say, that there are few things in this world to be more feared than such wrongly-educated men. Whoever comes across the path of any of them will find that he has encountered an intellectual highwayman. It is the direct tendency of many of the popular systems of education in the United States to produce such men. There are noble examples, in New-England and elsewhere, of common schools and private academies in which morality and religion are sedulously taught and beautifully illustrated; but read the one thousand and one advertisements which recommend new private and public schools; and from Georgia to Maine, you will find the same ideas of education. These advertisements promise to teach children Arithmetic, Grammar, History, Rhetoric, Geography, Logic, Metaphysics, Philosophy, Belles-Lettres, &c., and if it be a boarding school, then music and dancing, Latin, French and German,—yes, every nameable study that will expand and sharpen the *intellect*. The intellect with them is every thing. The whole system begins with the intellect, goes on with the intellect and ends with the intellect; though, peradventure, at the bottom of the advertisement in a note, in smaller type, we read these words,—"manners and morals particularly attended to;" and here manners are put before morals! Such are the ideas of education in these United States, *taken as a whole;* and I repeat, that the system is calculated to fill the

country with adroit reasoners and accomplished hypocrites; for, where the intellect is cultivated at the expense of the higher principles, there we see the power to do evil proportionally increased. To send out such persons into society is about as wise and as safe as to let loose mad dogs.

Any one who examines the educational statistics of France, England, and the United States, in connection with the records of the criminal courts, will find too much proof of these prophetic statements.

These superficial ideas of general education have mainly caused the neglect of spiritual culture. In the midst of this deplorable condition, what becomes the duty of our Sunday School Society? Is it not to utter its deep and emphatic protest against the continuance of a system of education which makes a giant of the intellect and a dwarf of the conscience; a system which keeps out God and Christ from the soul, and instead thereof enthrones selfishness and passion in their place? I say, if a Society whose central aim it is to Christianize childhood and to establish the kingdom of God in the human soul, should hold its peace in the presence of *such* facts, the very stones should cry out against it.

In the beginning of this report we asked, what were the defects? and where was the remedy? I have pointed out the chief defect; and would now point out the chief remedy.

The friends of Christian culture wish to cure existing evils and promote future prosperity by securing the harmonious development of *all* the powers of man's mixed nature, each passion, sentiment and affection occupying the exact place in the grown up *character*, which God at first ordained in the infant

constitution. Every such individual would be in harmony with the works and will of God; and, as no two persons are alike at birth, there would be a natural and infinite diversity concentered in a sublime unity.

To make this plain, let us look for a moment at an harmonious combination of the physical, intellectual and moral powers of man. Before our mind's eye, therefore, let us place a man, whose *physical* organization is perfectly developed; every bone, muscle and artery in its proper place, doing its proper work and none other. He has perfect health; but let us suppose such a mature physical organism to have no intellect and no conscience! What is he? Just one third of a man. Now, let us suppose another person, whose physical powers are all thus fully developed, and to them are added *intellectual* expansion and corresponding mental power; but, he has no conscience! What is he? Just two thirds of a man. Lastly, let us suppose a third person, who has all the physical and all the intellectual properties of the two just described, yet, in addition, he has a proportionate development of his *moral* powers. In him the moral nature has the sovereignty which God at first ordained as its right; the intellect serves faithfully under the conscience and the passions are all obedient in their subordinate sphere. Thus every part of his mixed constitution is harmoniously unfolded in perfect proportion and legitimate maturity, thus exhibiting all his powers in pure, native, symmetric and successful action! What is he? A MAN. A *whole* man. God's idea of a man.

There are materials in God's world for producing such a man; a man like Vespasian in muscular

strength, like Bacon in mental energy, and like Howard in moral elevation. To produce such illustrations of the divine idea in humanity should be the aim of our Sunday School Society, so far as it belongs to such a body of Christians to hold up such a model to this age. We should take the divine idea of nature and the Gospel, and diffuse it through the world; and we should not be content with any lower standard of education than that which Christ would adopt, could he now personally educate a child on earth.

Much shall we have done for our republic, and much for the Christian church, if we can convince parents that their children have moral powers and spiritual susceptibilities, as much as they have hands and feet; and furthermore, that these powers are *as* necessary to their eternal happiness, as feet are now necessary for walking, or hands for handling. It devolves on us to show, that a man cannot make the most of himself, cannot answer the purposes for which God created him, and therefore cannot to the utmost be useful and happy, unless he has a moral development corresponding to and symmetrical with his intellectual and physical. Every good and philosophic mind must acknowledge that intellectual culture, on which earthly success *often* depends, is subordinate to that religious character on which immortal happiness *always* depends. As God has provided appropriate food for every moment of the child's bodily growth, so has he provided appropriate food for every moment of the child's spiritual growth. It is the high calling of Sunday Schools to search out this food, and with it to feed the lambs of Christ's flock.

What, then, are the conclusions to which we come? Are they not these? First,—that the intellect is de-

veloped to a dangerous extent over the moral powers? and, secondly,—that Sunday Schools should publish through the world the absolute importance of changing the prevalent systems of education?

The great question, then, recurs,—What is the remedy for existing defects? To my conviction, *Christ and Christianity are the sole, sovereign and sufficient remedy.* The Gospel is that spiritual Bethesda whose waters the angel of the new covenant hath so troubled, that whosoever steppeth in shall find himself healed of whatsoever disease he hath. A living and sanctifying faith in Christ contains the seminal principles of all permanent reforms. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. To be in him is light; to be out of him is darkness. There never was a time when it was more important that the Christ of the New Testament should be pressed on men's consciences and hearts. When tumult and revolution are every day stunning our ears and the fiercest passions of man are in earthquake heavings, what so needful to guide and temper and hallow these movements as moral principle and Christian belief? Let the Sunday School then feel itself called upon, with peculiar emphasis, to rouse itself to new and godlike labors. Society has need of every breath of spiritual life which can be breathed into it.

To us, Unitarians, the call is singularly imperative. Our views of childhood and Christianity impose on us a most solemn duty, while they cheer us with the brightest hopes. We are not among those, who believe that total depravity is an anti-natal attribute of man, as teeth are an anti-natal attribute of a jaw; but we, on the contrary, believe that every child is born free from sin and free from holiness, yet capa-

ble of either; we, therefore, have the strongest encouragement to prepossess the youthful mind with truth, justice and love, thus barring up the door against impurity, falsehood and crime: and as all moral evil comes from the abuse of powers, which in themselves are good, it is of measureless moment to prejudice the young mind in favor of what is useful, right and pious: in other words, to enthrone Jesus Christ in the soul so that Satan cannot enter in and dwell there.

I accordingly repeat, that Christ and Christianity, applied as educational principles in the culture of our children, are the sole, sovereign and sufficient remedy for existing evils, and the only foundation of all true reform. Children educated in Christ's school will grow up healthy and happy, they will be through life useful and pious, and at death will find admission to the kingdom of heaven.

In closing this report, allow the Sunday School Society to address an anxious word to its several coadjutors.

To the *Common Schools* of our country it would say:—We rejoice in the much you have done; but we mourn over the much you have left undone. In some we joyfully descry the Christian system of divine morality and spiritual culture; but, of many we must say, that you do not recognize in children as you should, the *spiritual* and the *immortal;* you cannot therefore show how great natural laws apply to life and usefulness, to growth and happiness. Your instructions take cognizance mainly of the intellect and do not go down into the interior life of the soul. You rest in worldly rules, and superficial examples. You have let limited experience and selfish maxims take the place of the profound philosophy of human na-

ture. We ask you to look wider and deeper; to contemplate the whole nature of childhood, and then let your instruction touch the master-springs of the soul. You should get every thing into the school-house which the child will afterwards need in the world.—Do you reply to all this, and say, "we are afraid of sectarianism:"—and so are we; but, we are not so much afraid of any of the prevalent forms of Christianity as we are of the heathenism which threatens us; we are not half so much afraid of sectarianism as we are of infidelity, or as we are of the blackness and darkness of ignorance. Better eat sour bread than starve.

To *Sunday School Teachers* the Society would say:—Fellow laborers with God, who are called to walk in the Eden garden of childhood! may Heaven's richest blessing rest upon you. No work, this side the sun, is more honorable than yours; no work, this side eternity, so important. *Be thou faithful unto death.*

We ask of you two things. Be *thorough* in your teaching. Thoroughness is what we want. Society, you know, is inundated with shallow books and shallow thinking and shallow action. Shallowness is fashionable; and it is the bane of true religion. One Christian principle, well understood and thoroughly comprehended, is worth fifty, I had almost said fifty thousand, obscure, undefined, half comprehended ideas. Twilight views are the last on which we can safely rely.

The other thing we ask of you is this:—Do not substitute any thing for Divine revelation. Do not tell your children to go on a voyage of discovery round their own hearts in order to find out what God

ought to say to mankind, or what Christ *ought* to do for them; but tell them to go to the BIBLE, there to listen to what God has commanded and there to learn what Christ has done for them. You cannot give them too deep a reverence for God's holy word, or too strong a faith in Christ's sacrificial labors.

To *Parents* the Society would say:—Send your children steadily to the Sunday School; but do not rely on a single hour's instruction, in a week, for all your children's spiritual nourishment. If they gather a double portion of the heavenly manna on the Sabbath, you must remember that they will need the *daily* bread of Christian counsel and example to sustain and strengthen them. You can do what the Sunday School Teacher cannot: you can give them instruction amid the joys and dangers of every day. Let us ask you to begin your Christian culture at the first dawn of moral being. To this end you must watch the first buddings of passion, the first movement of the will, the first gush of affection. If you would most successfully cultivate the intellect of your children, begin with cultivating their moral powers. Moral teaching produces all other teaching, and is reproduced *in* all others; therefore let nothing go into their heads which is not first filtered through their hearts. The family should be the child's church and Heaven's nursery. Parents are as much the makers of their children's characters, as they are makers of their bodies. What can those parents answer at God's tribunal, who have done nothing for the souls of their children? I tremble for *such* parents! Their prayerless houses, their thankless tables and their Christless hearts will hereafter be swift witnesses against them. Hear what good old Baxter says of such:—"Ungodly parents

do serve the devil so effectually, in the first impressions on their children's minds, that it is more than magistrates and ministers and all reforming means can afterwards do to recover them from that sin to God. Whereas, if you would first engage their hearts to God by a religious education, *piety* would then have all those advantages that sin hath now."—There is, therefore, for you, Parents, a volume of wisdom in that old homely phrase: "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." If you would prevent a growth of the apples of Sodom, you must take care that the seeds are not planted.

But there is one fact to which you will allow us to allude, which is this,—that the indirect and apparently accidental influences of home are far more educational to your children than formal doctrine and carefully prepared example. There are infinitely complex and indescribable feelings, which, in the family circle, give the greatest force to ideas and the directest influence to conduct. These manifest themselves in the glance of a mother's eye, the tones of a father's voice, the manner of a faithful friend. It is this mysterious something, which is all around us like an atmosphere, that truly and permanently shapes youthful character. These influences, like the air of the house, go unceasingly to nourish or poison the inmates. We beg you, therefore, by all the love you bear to your children, be careful about the little things that happen in your family.

Lastly—To *Legislatures* the Sunday School Society would say its word. Defenders of our civil rights! we ask you to become guardians of our public morals; and therefore we ask you to force every unwilling and truant child into school. If you make

a law that forces a boy into prison because he is a thief, we call upon you to make a law which shall previously force him into a school-house to prevent him becoming a thief. "If a state," says Maccauly, "has a right to hang, it has a right to educate." We ask you to elevate the standard of common school instruction. We could give you statistics which speak in thunder tones to legislatures; but we forbear; nevertheless, in presence of them, we must ask you to enthrone religion in every school-house. On virtue alone can our republic rest unshaken. While we see so much prodigal expenditure for the *intellectual* and *physical*, we beg that something may be done for the *moral*. Spend only half as much money for education which is to redeem mankind, as you spend for war which is to destroy mankind, and you shall hear from us no more mournful, statistical syllogisms, but rather a shout of joyous congratulation.

In view of the principles laid down in this report, let it close with this summary.

The laws of God are co-extensive with himself. They are *about* man and *in* man as is the atmosphere he breathes. He acts amid these laws. If he obeys them they make him happy; if he breaks them he must pay the penalty. To obey these laws they must be comprehended; to comprehend them they must be studied; and how can our children study them aright except by the guidance of a teacher; and how can he teach aright except he understand? Hence the need of competent Teachers. Let a child be taught understandingly what his *physical* constitution is; let him be shown the skilful involution of fibres, the wise entanglement of muscles; let him comprehend the action of the heart, stomach and

lungs, and see the blood rolling through the rivers of his frame; and, after this, explain to him the indigestible nature of alcohol, the poisonous action of medicine, the fire-fury of licentiousness; thus enable him clearly to see how vice and folly dislocate and derange the beauteous and healthful harmonies of his physical nature, and he will *then* understand, that it is just as wise to run into intemperance and lasciviousness in order to promote his pleasure, as it would be to break his arm for the sake of amusement.

Let him, also, be taught understandingly what his *intellectual* constitution is. Let him be convinced that the laws of mind are a voice of God within; and are at once demanding and benignant. Let his imagination be led so to embody his ideal in life and duty as to fill the humblest condition with infinite interests; and let his judgment be called to weigh questions involving the most searching analysis and the most delicate comparisons. Thus create by degrees a proper intellectual atmosphere in which his reasoning powers shall always breathe.

But first, and highest of all, let him be taught understandingly what his *moral* constitution is. Let him be taught that conscience is God within him, placed there to be sovereign over every appetite and passion, over every sentiment and purpose. Let him, day after day, unweariedly be advised to listen to this heavenly monitor, while it decides upon cases of moral obligation and actual conduct. To give vitality and permanence to all his moral instincts, let the star in the east lead him to the manger at Bethlehem and thence to the cross on Calvary; so shall he have the same mind in him that was also in Christ Jesus, and thus represent his Saviour on the earth.

I say, let the inquisitive mind of a child be thus instructed and established in physical, intellectual and moral truth; let him thus understand himself,—what he is, why he is here and where he is going,—let him come to a clear apprehension of what God wishes a human creature to be, and it is not possible then to deny that *such* a youth will be better able to begin life's duties, to meet its trials, to enjoy its sweets and to bear its ills, than children now are under our present systems. Yes, such a child would be a well-beloved child of God; and his course may be likened to the revolving earth. His daily duties, performed in punctual obedience to the wise laws of his nature, would be like the noiseless diurnal rotation of the globe on its axis; while, at the same time, he has like the earth another motion, he is speeding his bright way to heaven in his infinite orbit round the great luminous centre of spiritual attraction, THE THRONE OF GOD.

CHARLES BROOKS,

Corresponding Secretary.

BOSTON, May 31st, 1848.

[The following was submitted to the meeting by the Chairman of the Agents, Lewis G. Pray, Esq.; and was read by the President.]

REPORT OF THE AGENCY.

The board of Visiting Agents in the year which is now closing have been as actively employed as usual. They have published one tract on the "Duties, Encouragements and Rewards of Sunday School Teachers" by Rev. F. T. Gray. Of this tract they have distributed directly to the teachers on their visits, or indirectly by other means, about one thousand copies, or twelve thousand pages. They have published also during the year, another of their Juvenile tracts, entitled "Glad Tidings," the edition of which was four thousand. Of this, and their previous tracts of the same kind, they have distributed to the children of our Sunday Schools about three thousand eight hundred copies, averaging twelve pages each, making the total number of pages about forty-five thousand.

Soon after the last Anniversary, an edition of twenty-five hundred copies of the Annual Report was published and distributed to most of our Sunday Schools throughout the Union, and to each school, a number in proportion to the number of their teachers. This report has been the subject of earnest and animated discussion at many of our teachers' meetings,—it has been favorably reviewed in some of our leading periodicals, and we trust has been highly useful in the furtherance of Christian truth, and the cause of early Christian and religious instruction.

The returns from the Visiting agents are not for the present year full or complete, as in some cases no minutes were taken of the numbers in the schools visited, or the numbers addressed. But a few statements from some of them will give a clear intimation of the work done, the favor with which their visits have been received, and the condition of the schools. For instance, Isaiah Bangs, Esq., has visited six towns, addressed seven schools, has delivered ten addresses to parents and to pupils, and travelled for the purpose, out and in, seven hundred miles. Rev. F. T. Gray has visited seven towns, addressed six schools and one Convention or public celebration, and travelled over four hundred miles. G. F. Thayer, Esq., has visited ten different places, addressed fifteen different schools and Societies, has delivered twenty-one addresses, and travelled more than six hundred miles. In these schools were 1638 pupils, 255 teachers, and the persons addressed were more than 3000. Mr. Pray has visited thirteen towns, addressed sixteen schools, delivered twenty-six addresses to about five thousand persons, and travelled nearly one thousand miles. Rev. C. Brooks has visited seventeen towns, addressed twenty-three schools and Societies; has given in all, twenty-seven addresses, and travelled out and home, more than a thousand miles. Other visits have been made by Rev. Mr. Muzzey, by Mr. G. G. Channing, and by Mr. S. G. Simpkins. The totals, so far as received, are as follows.

The number of different towns visited, is .	58
The number of schools visited and addressed	73
The number of Teachers in these schools, was	1129
The number of Pupils	7023

The number of oral or written addresses delivered 93
The number of persons addressed . . 14000
The number of miles travelled . . 4074

These details indicate, we think, a lively interest on the part of our schools in the work of the agency, and a willingess on the part of the agents, faithfully to respond to, and meet it. With scarcely an exception the condition of the schools is reported of favorably, as improving, or as prosperous in a satisfactory degree. It is gratifying to state, that in this work they have found much talent engaged. Men of the best minds and hearts, standing high in public estimation and character, were found enlisted in the service of many of them, as Superintendents and Teachers. The feeling is everywhere deepening, that the amount of religious education must be increased, or the rising generation cannot be secured against the new and more fascinating temptations and corruptions of the age, or our civil institutions, now the object of so much admiration and hope, kept prosperous and safe.

The various County Associations have held their annual or semi-annual meetings as usual, some of which have been attended by our Agents. At Hubbardston, our Agent, Rev. Mr. Gray, met the West Worcester Association and addressed there an audience of a thousand persons; and at Dublin, N. H. Mr. Thayer a large assemblage. A large attendance, and a right spirit were manifest, as we understand, on all these occasions. If such Associations were formed in all our Counties, or in connection with each of our Ministerial Associations, little would remain to be done, by outward appliance, by which to secure the stability and success of the Sunday School system.

We are gratified in being able to state, that during the last year by the contribution of the sum required, thirteen persons, Superintendents or Clergymen, have been made Life-Members of the Society, which is a larger number than in any previous year;—namely, Rev. C. T. Thayer, and Hon. Robert Rantoul of Beverly; G. W. Keene, Esq., of Lynn; Rev. J. T. Sargent and Charles Forster, Esq., of Somerville; John W. Mulliken, Esq., of Littleton; John W. Kingman, Esq., of Dover, N. H.; Dr. J. P. Spooner, of Dorchester; Moses Adams, Esq., of Dublin, N. H; Richard Warren, Esq., of New-York; Rev. J. K. Waite, of Gloucester; Asher Green, Esq., of Fitchburg, and Thomas D. Elliot, Esq., of New Bedford.

We add a list of all the towns and cities to which visits have been made:—49 in Massachusetts; 4 in New Hampshire; 3 in Vermont, and 2 in New York; Andover (North); Boston (16 visits); Bernardston; Brattleboro, Vt.; Brookline (2 visits); Beverly; Cooperstown, N. Y.; Cambridge; Concord (2 visits); Cohassett; Charlestown; Dover, N. H. (2 visits); Deerfield; Dublin, N. H. (Convention); Dover, Ms.; Framingham; Gloucester; Hubbardston (Convention); Harvard; Jamaica Plain; Keene, N. H.; Leominster; Lexington (East); Lexington; Lunenburg (2 visits); Lowell (2 visits); Marshfield; Marlboro; Montague; Milton (2 visits); Mendon; Montpelier, Vt.; Medford; Northboro'; Needham (2 visits); Natick (South); Newton (West); Northfield; Petersham; Quincy (2 visits); Richfield, N. Y.; Rowe; Roxbury; Salem; South Scituate; Springfield; Somerville; Taunton; Watertown; Walpole, N. Y. (2 visits); Walpole, Ms.; Westford; Windsor, Vt.; Warwick; West Cambridge.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The twentieth anniversary of the Sunday School Society was observed on Wednesday evening, May 31st, at Rev. Dr. Gannett's Church in Federal Street. The house was early and densely filled. The President, Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, in the chair. The meeting was opened with a short and most appropriate prayer by the Rev. Charles T. Brooks of Newport, R. I. A part of the annual Report was then read by Rev. Charles Brooks, of Boston, the Corresponding Secretary of the Society; after which the following questions, printed with the order of exercises, were presented for general discussion :—

1. How can the *intellectual* faculties be early enlisted under the dominion of the *moral?*

2. How can the scriptural idea of Christ be most clearly imparted to a young mind?

3. Is sin, with its awful consequences and its Gospel remedies, presented with sufficient frequency and impressiveness in our Sunday schools?

4. If spiritual culture be the highest of all culture, what aid should the Sunday school expect from parents and Christian professors?

5. How far should oral and textual instruction be united? What principles should govern us in the selection of text-books and Sunday school libraries.

6. Are there not peculiarities in the present religious condition of the community, which call for extraordinary efforts on the part of Sunday school teachers?

Addresses were then made by Rev. Messrs. Palfrey, of Belfast, Me.; Osgood, of Providence, R. I.; Fuller, of Manchester, N. H.; Dorr, of Lexington; Dall, of Needham; and Waterston, of Boston. These addresses were marked with sound good sense, elevated piety, and moving eloquence.

After the addresses were made, the President closed with some most appropriate remarks on retaining the older pupils in our Sunday Schools. The benediction was pronounced by Rev. Mr. Allen, of Northboro'.

The meeting continued to a late hour, and was spoken of as one of the most valuable which has been held. The interest in the cause evidently deepens each year. An additional charm was lent to the occasion, by several pieces of music performed at intervals, with spirit and taste, by the choir connected with the Warren Street Chapel, under the direction of the Rev. C. F. Barnard.

THE

TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

CONTAINING

AN ADDRESS ON PARENTAL INFLUENCE.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE

PROCEEDINGS AT THE PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

THIRTIETH OF MAY, 1849.

BOSTON:
SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS,
124, *Washington Street.*
1849.

OFFICERS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.
1849.

President.

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*** As Schools or Societies may be desirous of contributing to the funds of the Agency, to aid in visiting their own and other schools, and at the same time to testify their affection and regard for their pastor or superintendent, the following article from the Constitution of the Society is subjoined: —

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BOOKS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

LIVERMORE'S COMMENTARIES ON THE GOSPELS AND THE ACTS. 3 vols.
WARE'S LIFE OF THE SAVIOUR.
WARE ON THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.
GREENWOOD'S LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.
MILMAN'S HISTORY OF THE JEWS.
BULFINCH'S HOLY LAND AND ITS INHABITANTS.
ROBINSON'S DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE. (Calmet's.)
ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE.
THOUGHTS ON MORAL AND SPIRITUAL CULTURE. By Rev. R. C. Waterston.
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HISTORY OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS, AND OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG, FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES. By Lewis G. Pray.
SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER'S GUIDE. By Rev. A. B. Muzzey.

MANUALS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

FIRST BOOK FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS. Channing's Catechism.
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LESSONS FROM THE GOSPELS, comprising the Life of the Saviour.
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THE SAVIOUR'S LIFE, written expressly for Children and Youth. By Rev. Edwin Chapman, of England.
THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES; their Origin, Peculiarities, and Transmission. By Rev. H. A. Miles.

REPORT.

THE Sunday School Society now enters on its manhood. It is twenty-one years old to-day. With a freer spirit and a stronger hand, it would go forth to its heavenly labors; and its first appeal shall be made to its best ally, — the FAMILY. The Sunday School looks to the family for its supply, its sanction, and — may we not add? — its character and utility. It therefore addresses parents with anxiety, beseeching them so to begin the spiritual education of their children as to make the Sunday School lessons only a happy continuation of domestic nurture. The Sunday School Society does not know that it can perform a more timely or momentous duty to Christianity, to the church, and to the rising generation, than by revealing to families their sacred position and educational powers. Our best ally, therefore, will allow us to speak the truth in love. We shall utter a word of encouragement, and sound a note of alarm.

A true Christian family is a beautiful type of the gentle happiness of heaven, — a garden of Eden without its tempter. The family is the first element and the last rampart of society. In the calm strength of domestic affection lies the basis of public morality. It is of incalculable importance to the world, that there should be some safe retreat for the human affections; a place where

the heart may expand in freedom. Home is this sacred asylum; and, with the blessing of his family upon him in the morning, man can go forth to stand up strongly, through the day, against all the assaults of craft, selfishness, and crime.

In the family, each one is allowed to be an individual, while all together constitute a unity. Rejoicing in a common origin, or in conventional ties which grow as strong as life, they feel the influence of a common law, are actuated by a common spirit, and rejoice in a common labor. A family has thus a specific individuality, a sort of central idea, aim, and character; and it must therefore exert an interfusive and amalgamating power over its members. When birds eat a particular kind of food, it colors every bone in their bodies; so the intellectual and spiritual aliment of a family tinges every soul in the house, giving what may be called the family hue. Is it possible for human language to overstate the moral power which properly belongs to the family?

Consider, then, that into the midst of this social circle, God's primary school, — to hear what is there said, and see what is there done, — the young immortal is introduced, passive, ductile, and hungry. There it is to take the first step of sensuous experience, there to redden with the first blush of passion, there to melt with the first touch of pity, there to will with the first motive of hope, and there to love with the first gush of affection. Yes, there stands the child, in its Eden innocence, ready to be made a giant of hell or an angel of heaven. Christ, the good Shepherd, takes this lamb in his arms, and says, "Of such is the kingdom of God." It is now a member of that kingdom; and, turning to its parents, he says, *See that your child never goes out of the kingdom.*

It has no predeterminate wish to go out. In the pure

soul of childhood, there is an instinctive love of the true and the good, the sympathetic and the high. This is the source of its piety, and shows itself in an unquenchable thirst for the waters of life. Childhood welcomes God; it loves the Father, and delights to sit and sun itself in the thought of the Infinite. The first spiritual light, which dawns upon a child's mind, is like God's first visit to Eden, a message of love and strength.

Why is the family the best place for beginning a child's heavenly life? We answer, —

I. Because it is the best place *to preoccupy the soul with good images;* the best place to prejudice the ready will in favor of what is heroic, benevolent, and godlike. Every day's experience furnishes the young mind with new motives, new conflicts, new hopes. How important, then, that each one should contain a proper moral polarity, ranging itself in the line of truth and goodness! As the first and most impressible portion of the child's life is passed exclusively within the influences of the family, and thus from necessity it is confined to one school, this arrangement seems providential for preoccupying the mind with virtue.

But there is another reason. The idea of God and Christ, religion and immortality, is not imparted to a child by *argument*, but by affirmation, by example, by influence, by emotions, by affections. Logic and metaphysics are much later processes. The child may get up as far as man by the steps of argument, but he reaches God only on the wings of faith. We undertake to argue grown-up sinners into religion, and Heaven knows how signally we fail. Estimate the difference of mental disposition between the young and old, in yielding to motives. Mark the ductility of children. Their minds how plastic and facile! but the mature mind how fixed and flinty! In

this respect the aged mind may be compared to the impassive mirror, which retains an image only while that image is before it; but the young mind is like the sensitive daguerreotype plate, which seizes and holds fast for ever any image that may be thrown upon it. The best time, therefore, for effectually enthroning justice and love, truth and piety, in the human soul, is the time *before* any evil spirits have entered in to dwell there. Consequently we say, preoccupy the mind.

This is Old Testament and New Testament wisdom, and the family is the best place for doing this first great work. Parents can introduce God and Christ into their child's heart, and thus far keep sin and Satan out. We say again, *preoccupy the mind.*

II. The family is the best place *to impart accurate ideas of God and man*, because God and man are represented in the family. To young children the parents stand instead of Deity; and the children, having hearts that must be given somewhere, first give to their parents the love and reverence which are afterwards to find a higher expression. The idea of the earthly parent grows until it grasps the heavenly. Christ, by describing God as a Father, has enabled the mind to ascend from the idea of a father finite and visible to the idea of a Father infinite and invisible. A right idea of God, therefore, unconsciously enters the mind along with the right idea of parent. So every parent's character is a life-commentary on the character of God.

Moreover, to young children the parents stand instead of mankind. Parents are all the world to such children; and their limited experience leads them to think, that the world has only such fathers and such mothers.

But let us look closer at this subject. In a great degree, God has made the two parents to represent separately the mixed attributes of the child. For example,

the father symbolizes intellect, reason, philosophy; while the mother represents feeling, love, devotion. Not entirely, but to a great extent, the instructions and example of each parent will run in these distinctive channels. How wise the divine ordination to secure in this way the best development of *all* the powers of the child! Thus two parents become necessary, and both perform their work from the heart. The mother's office is evidently first in importance. The affections should be developed earliest of all; and God has therefore furnished the true and timely teacher, who teaches with a blended wisdom and love. The intellect comes later into play; and then the father stands ready to give it direction, stimulus, and power. Thus the child is taught first to love, and then to reason: the mother, therefore, is the deity of infancy; the father, the deity of childhood. What can more clearly prove, that the family is the place ordained by the Creator for beginning the formation of the highest character? Is it not, then, the first ally of the Sunday School?

III. The third reason, why the family is thought to be the best place for beginning the heavenly culture, is drawn from this fact in our mental phenomena; namely, *that mind, like matter, moves in the direction of its impelling force.* How important, then, is the *first* impulse! Children have primarily the age of impressions, and then the age of will. The former brings them within the sacred enclosure of parental influence; the latter, to the period of responsibility. As the impressions are anterior to all choice, so they are independent of all memory: nevertheless, when often repeated, they become formative of character. This nurture of the house gives the will its first movement, and may be called atmospheric; for it is breathed into the child's soul before he is conscious of it.

Thus all the various moods of feeling, sentiment, and affection, propagate themselves in young hearts. They may be the oxygen of life, or the azote of death; but one thing is certain, — *they will exist.* The absolute force exerted by parents upon their children is a positive fact in human history, and must ever be a fact, an ordained fact, an indispensable fact. Out of this fact, passions, emotions, sentiments, principles, and character, in the children, are generated. It must be so, as effect follows cause. Out of this fact, moreover, there must flow a silent influence and a moral power, which, if good, will be to children what the sun and dew are to plants. The noble resolve, which a Christian parent has awakened, may give a heavenward direction to the soul, as it starts in its immortal career; so the evil bent, which a wicked parent has given to the feelings, sentiments, and affections of his son, has prepared that son to set forth on a course of selfishness and crime. Custom and example become the magistrate of young life. Children will think the family thoughts, and do the family deeds, just as they sing the family songs, and eat the family food. We may therefore set it down as a fact on which we may so far build our systems of education, that the man will always show some traits of his boyhood, however much other causes may have modified them. Home will linger about him still; as the grinder of aromatic seeds carries about with him, wherever he goes, the fragrance of his workshop.

To the cause of Sunday Schools it is of great importance to know what we mean, when we say, that mind moves in the direction of its impelling force. If one can be excused for being personal, I would here state a fact. For the last twenty-five years I have been watching and recording, and I deem this the fit time to announce the results; and they are these, — that the family influences

which have been brought to bear on the first *ten* years of childhood have been more powerful than all others. Just as the twig was bent, the tree has been inclined. With regard to boys, these influences, in five cases out of ten, have decided the choice of profession and pursuit in life; and, in eight cases out of ten, have decided the character of the individual. The intellectual character may be, and often is, more affected out of the house; but the religious is shaped in the family.

So much for experience and recorded facts. But, on a subject of this importance, I will not rely on such statements, since some may think them extreme. I prefer to make a lower statement, which, I suppose, every person fifty years old will say is entirely true; namely, that the future moral character of any individual *may* be decided within the first *twelve* years of his life. As the young Indian slave wears through all his days the inburnt marks of his first master, so a child's soul may wear through life the spiritual marks of his early education. This well-settled conviction has been the cause of all the interest I have ever felt, and all the efforts I have ever made, for Infant Schools, for Primary Schools, for Grammar Schools, for Sunday Schools, and for general education; and, in view of this, I cannot but think that the present neglect of the religious education of the young is not only unwise, but heinously wicked. If it be true, that, in the early periods of life, there be these silent and deep educational agencies at work, what fact can so strongly recommend the Sunday School to every lover of his race? To neglect applying moral and religious motives to the pure and opening mind of youth, is neglecting the first duty of a parent, the sacred duty of a church, and the political duty of a Christian commonwealth. What should we think of the farmer who neglected to sow his corn until Septem-

ber? To sow it for a harvest then would be about as wise as to cast it on the ocean, in which latter case it might become animal life, but would never re-appear as grain. We have no words to express our grief at the neglect of the Christian culture of those myriads who are rising around us, and who are soon to determine the character of our community and the fate of our churches. If the prophet, in his days of old, could exclaim, "Pour out thy fury, O Lord! upon the families that call not on thy name," — what imprecation would he not be justified in using now, if he could stand up in this community, and see the neglect of family religion and Christian nurture? We say, then, that our daily experience, as well as the history of every different nation and every different religion, illustrates the fact, that mind, like matter, moves in the direction of its impelling force; and, if so, what is the inference? It is this, — that, if the *first* impulse be given to it at the *wrong* point, unless its momentum be resisted and overcome by some opposing power, it will move onward in the path of error, it will drive along its downward way, with a velocity accelerated by all the elements of its own corruption, and by the gravity of accumulating vice, till it finally passes and is lost in dreary space beyond the reach of centripetal forces.

What, then, ought families to become that they may be fellow-workers with the Sunday School? They should each become a Christian school; not a popedom, but a brotherhood, where humility with regard to themselves, benevolence with regard to others, and piety with regard to God, are ruling principles, constituting the moral atmosphere of the house; thus making heaven no strange or distant or impossible place on earth. In other words, Christ must be superinduced upon every family attribute, family law, and family hope. Until he has become the

informing spirit of the household, the kingdom of God cannot be adequately taught in that family. Until families, *as* families, are thus Christianized, we cannot expect a fundamental moral reform through the world. The light that illumines and the grace that sanctifies the family, are the light that can illumine and the grace that can sanctify the world.

Are families thus Christianized? Are the two central principles of the spiritual universe, *justice* and *love*, enthroned in them? We fear not. We greatly fear that religious instruction in most of them is wofully neglected, and in many of the rest but superficially and accidentally given. If Sunday Schools prevent domestic nurture, the sooner they cease the better. We believe they have done more than any other agency to extend it.

The Sunday School would speak kindly, but it should speak honestly, of some hinderances to the spiritual culture of the young, as they now exist in families.

In some few families, we find a total ignorance and carelessness respecting the nature, the aims, and the aptitudes of children. What can we expect from the children of such families but stolid carelessness with regard to prayer, duty, and progress? Such a family would be likely to efface or counteract whatever good impressions the Sunday School had made.

Most parents give too little heed to the physical development of their offspring, during the first seven years. In aiming to make intellectual prodigies, they often undermine health, and thereby induce weakness, irritation, discontent, and even irreligion.

Some strive to sharpen the intellect, and let the conscience take care of itself. This system may end only in doubling the power of doing wrong.

Few parents seem to remember, that the incidental con-

versations and unmeditated actions of their house are the most efficient educators.

Others seem slow to understand, that a child's employments, joys, and sorrows, are as positive realities, reaching its inmost soul, as their own can be. Hence sympathies are chilled.

It is a grave error in some to overlook this fact; namely, that there is a fountain of trustfulness in a child's soul. If this faith be trifled with or darkened, the whole world of truth and happiness may be shut out.

Some parents have changeable laws. A system of uncertain, fluctuating discipline has upon children about the same effect that January would have upon the harvest, if projected into the midst of July. It is a system which will effectually destroy all right ideas of government, both human and divine.

Many parents govern too much. They repeat a thousand little, insignificant "shalls" and "shants," instead of implanting the well-defined principles which would govern all these little cases without a word. Children thus continually assaulted get to consider the whole parade of biddings and forbiddings as a game of chance, and govern themselves accordingly. He who plants one truth clearly in a child's conscience plants there a hundred governors.

There are families where a steady moral influence is not trusted, but positive command is always substituted. They will not wait for truth and affection to do their work, but prefer to send the lightning-flash of imperial authority, which well nigh kills the free soul of childhood.

We are sorry to say, there are parents who falsify to their children. Instead of an open, frank, and manly honor, they give untrue or insufficient reasons. Thus, by

equivocation and falsehood, they destroy the great principle of truthfulness, which is the foundation of the moral fabric.

We are quite as sorry to allude to another class; parents who are remarkable for giving good religious lessons on the Sabbath, and who are as remarkable for breaking them through the week. This is feeding a son with one hand, and stabbing him with the other. A parent can conquer a child's heart, only by conquering his own. Words affect us just in proportion as we believe wisdom to dwell in him who utters them; so, example will move us just in proportion as we believe him to have lived out what he shows us. That parent, therefore, who converts mobile speech into righteousness of life, can talk to his children in the tones of a divine messenger.

We cannot close this report without saying a word to *mothers*, because the moral province is eminently theirs. The whole ancient world elevated *maternal* love above *paternal;* and all experience confirms this distinction. In the mother's hand, more than in any other, is the destiny of future empires, churches, and families. She stands at the fountain, and she is to give direction to those first ideas, first emotions, and first efforts, which are to swell and grow to mighty powers, sufficient at last to bless or curse a world. It is for her to descry the ideal human being that lies concealed in every infant, and then to bring it out, and finally to invest it with positive life. It is for her to embroider the mind of her child all over with figures of her own selection. In short, it is for her to open heaven to the young eye of faith, and thus make her child an heir-apparent of all the wealth of all the future. Thus it is for her to make the developing process so perfect, that the curative one will never be needed. The All-wise has given to her the requisite attributes. He has

given her patience to wait, and gentleness to win; sagacity to see, and conscience to guide. In other words, he has given her *love*. Love is a mother's life-spirit and motive-spring: it prompts her to watch and pray, to sing and suffer, to teach and persevere. She has from God this bridal-dower of love, that she may lose herself in her children. It is her delightful office to show the warm and sunny side of life to the buoyant and hopeful spirits around her. It is for her to preserve their infant purity, and to plant sweet gladness in their opening hearts. It is thus in her power to make the fresh morning breezes of childhood fan them all their days. Inestimable privilege! momentous obligation! Toil on, Christian mother! toil on in silence and in hope. Expect not the applause of the world: it is seldom that a Cornelia finds a Plutarch to connect her name with the Gracchi. One thing, however, you know: God sees you, and he never forgets. Another thing you know: if you have educated your children aright, they will recognize you in heaven, and there they will thank you for ever.

The conclusion, then, to which we have come is this, — that the family is the place where the highest Christian character must begin; and thereupon follows another conclusion, momentous to Sunday Schools, and it is this, — that just so far as truth, benevolence, and piety, reign in the family circle, just so far is the Sunday School made able to elevate and sanctify the souls of its pupils; and just so far as carelessness and cruelty and sin prevail in a child's home, just so far is the Sunday School rendered comparatively powerless to that child.

May we not close with referring to the idea of future accountability? Imagine parents called to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; before that Saviour, among whose last words was the solemn command, — "FEED

MY LAMBS." And now the judgment hath set, and the books are opened; and, behold, pious parents come and bring their virtuous children, those children joyfully testifying to parental fidelity. To such parents the Saviour says, "Inasmuch as ye have performed these offices of love to the least of these my brethren, ye have done them unto me." Then careless and ungodly parents are summoned; and their children, standing up, do accuse them thus, "We were spiritually hungry, and you gave us not the bread that came down from heaven; we were spiritually thirsty, and you gave us not the waters of life; we were naked, but you clothed us not with the garments of salvation; we were in the prison of sin, but you visited us not with the liberty wherewith Christ makes his disciples free." To such parents the Saviour says, "Inasmuch as ye have refused these services of love to the least of these my brethren, ye have refused them unto me." — "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous, into life eternal."

CHARLES BROOKS,
Corresponding Secretary.

BOSTON, *May* 30, 1849.

REPORT

OF THE

AGENTS OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY

FOR THE YEAR 1848—49.

THE agents have responded to the calls of schools at their regular sessions, anniversaries, openings and closings for the season, rural gatherings, conventions, &c. &c. throughout the year, as far as has been practicable; although they regret to state, that the notice has, on some occasions, been so short as to deprive them of the pleasure of attending, owing to previous engagements.

Mr. Brooks has addressed thirty-three schools, &c. in various towns in Maine, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts; besides making sixteen other addresses to parents, and friends of religious education.

Mr. Thayer has attended on twenty occasions, in Maryland, New York, New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts; and made thirty-three addresses in all.

Mr. Ware has visited and addressed eight schools, &c. in New York, Vermont, and Massachusetts.

Mr. Muzzey, five schools, &c. in towns of New York and Massachusetts.

Mr. Bangs, five schools, &c. in towns of Massachusetts.

Mr. Gray, three schools, &c. in towns in the same State.

Mr. Simpkins, one rural school-gathering in Sharon, Mass.

No returns have been received from the other agents.

The disparity of visits in most instances, as above stated, arises from the circumstance, that several of the gentlemen are clergymen, having the charge of parishes, which they could not leave on the Sabbath.

Exact estimates of the travel, audiences, &c. have not been returned; but it may be stated, that upwards of four thousand of the Society's tracts have been distributed, besides many from other quarters. The agents have travelled several thousand miles in this service, and addressed many thousand teachers, pupils, parents, and other friends of Sunday Schools.

The labors of the agents, so agreeable to themselves, have, in almost every instance, been received with a high appreciation of their beneficial effects; and, in many instances, an ardor of welcome and an enthusiastic expression of satisfaction extended to them, which repaid the laborers many fold for their efforts.

They have found a good degree of interest and zeal in the teachers generally, although one of their number suggests the need of "teachers deeply imbued with the spirit of the great Master-Teacher;" and this is deemed indispensable to complete success in this important work.

Another laments that, in many cases where the teachers have the right qualifications, "a corresponding interest among *parents* is wanting." In this sentiment, most of the agents concur; and, while they grieve for the fact, would earnestly solicit the attention of the Society to it, praying them, if possible, to devise some plan or means whereby a remedy may be applied to so serious an evil.

To ensure entire success, as far as human means can effect it, and enable the Sunday School to perform its mission in full, we need, *first*, intelligent, earnest, religious, and devoted *teachers; secondly*, active, prompt, methodical *superintendents; thirdly*, parents who appre-

ciate the advantages of Sunday-school instruction, and who are not only willing to suffer occasionally some slight personal inconvenience to promote the children's welfare and the prosperity of the school, but who will *habitually* give a hearty co-operation to the measures adopted at school for the spiritual and moral progress of their children. *Finally* and *chiefly*, the *minister* must look with favour upon the institution; must have faith in it; visit the school when in session; encourage the teachers by his countenance, and the pupils by an occasional word in a "general exercise." He must have the teachers often at his house, and aid them by his counsel, and by explaining those knotty points which not unfrequently perplex the young teacher. He should recommend the school to his people, particularly to mothers, not from the pulpit merely, but in his parochial visits; not incidentally, but purposely and with earnestness; showing that he looks upon it — as it really is — as the *nursery of the church*, in which Christ is to be honored, and from which heaven is to be peopled.

With these aids, the school cannot but thrive. The material to act upon — the young minds — are always to be had, and ready to receive the spiritual impress. But the degree of elevation at which the school shall arrive, will inevitably be in proportion to the supply of these indispensable means. The school may *exist* with but one of them, alone, although its existence will probably be but a drowsy or a languishing one; but, if the minister *have not faith in its utility and purpose*, or if he manifest an indifference to it, *its fate is sealed*, — it must be that of an early dissolution; and the verdict of its jury of inquest would be — "*Chilled to death by the minister's neglect.*"

In conclusion, the heartfelt prayer of your associated

agents is, that means may be adopted by the Society, at its present meeting, to secure a more vital activity and interest in the cause of Sunday Schools, among all persons that are in any way connected with them.

Respectfully submitted, for the Agents, by

G. F. THAYER, *Chairman.*

BOSTON, *May* 30, 1849.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE twenty-first anniversary of the Sunday School Society was observed on Wednesday evening, May 30, in the Rev. Dr. Gannett's Church, Federal-street. In the absence of the President, the Hon. Samuel Hoar, of Concord, was invited to preside. A short and appropriate prayer was offered by Rev. Dr. Hall, of Providence. A part of the Annual Report was then read by Rev. Charles Brooks, of Boston, the Corresponding Secretary of the Society; after which, the following questions, printed with the order of exercises, were presented for discussion: —

1. How far are parents and the church responsible for the condition of Sunday Schools?

2. How can Sunday Schools be made effectual in preventing crime?

3. What is the relative value of conversation among the means of Christian culture?

4. How can the true missionary spirit be introduced into our Sunday Schools?

5. Should the idea of Christ as a *Redeemer* be presented to a child before the idea of Christ as a *Teacher?* — 1 Tim. i. 15. John xviii. 37.

6. Are there not peculiarities in the present religious condition of the community, which call for extraordinary efforts on the part of Sunday-school teachers?

Addresses were then made by Rev. Charles T. Brooks, of Newport, R. I.; John W. Foster, Esq. of Portsmouth, N. H.; by Rev. Messrs. De Lange, of Illinois; Edward E. Hale, of Worcester, Mass.; and George W. Burnap, of Baltimore, Md. These addresses were marked with clear

views of truth, practical suggestions, and enlarged philanthropy.

The Chairman favored the meeting with a few remarks, full of wisdom and experience. The benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Calvin Lincoln, of Fitchburg.

The meeting continued to a late hour, and the interest in the cause widens and deepens yearly. An additional charm was lent to the occasion by music from the sweet voices of a youthful choir, connected with the Warren-street Chapel, under the direction of Rev. C. F. Barnard.

CHILDREN'S MISSION TO THE CHILDREN OF THE DESTITUTE.

This Society, which originated with a child of a Sunday School, has just been established in Boston. Its aim is to search out and rescue destitute children from vice, and to introduce them into the Common Schools and Sunday Schools. It has appointed a Missionary for the work, and he is to be paid by the children of the Sunday Schools. Nothing but good can come from such a system of Christian sympathy and active beneficence. Cannot each Sunday School in the country do *something* towards a similar object near them?

NOTE.

The Board of Directors of the Sunday School Society, having printed double the usual number of copies of the Annual Report, respectfully and urgently request those Pastors and Superintendents, into whose hands it may come, to interest themselves to see that each family in the parish, as well as each teacher in the Sunday School, has the perusal of the Address on *parental influence and responsibility*. They are anxious that this request receive early and particular attention.

Printed by John Wilson, 21, School-street, Boston.

THE

TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

544.30

CONTAINING

STATISTICAL RETURNS,

WITH LETTERS FROM FEMALE TEACHERS,

AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE

PROCEEDINGS AT THE PUBLIC ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-NINTH OF MAY, 1850.

BOSTON:
SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS,
124, WASHINGTON STREET.
1850.

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*** *Communications to be addressed to the first-named, Chairman of the Agents, 24, Harrison Avenue, Boston.*

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Waite, Rev. J. K., *Gloucester.*
Warren, Richard, *New York.*

* Deceased.

*** As Schools or Societies may be desirous of contributing to the funds of the Agency, to aid in visiting their own and other schools, and at the same time to testify their affection and regard for their pastor or superintendent, the following article from the Constitution of the Society is subjoined: —

ART. 12. — The sum of Ten Dollars, paid into the treasury by or for any one person, shall constitute such person a Life Member of the Society.

Books for Sunday School Teachers.

Livermore's Commentaries on the Gospels and the Acts. 3 vols.
Ware's Life of the Saviour.
Ware on the Formation of the Christian Character.
Greenwood's Lives of the Apostles.
Milman's History of the Jews.
Bulfinch's Holy Land and its Inhabitants.
Robinson's Dictionary of the Bible. (Calmet's.)
Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge.
Moral and Spiritual Culture. By Rev. R. C. Waterston.
Hints to Sunday School Teachers. By Rev. T. B. Fox.
History of Sunday Schools, and of the Religious Education of the Young, from the Earliest Times. By Lewis G. Pray.
Sunday School Teacher's Guide. By Rev. A. B. Muzzey.
Lectures on Christian Doctrine. By A. P. Peabody.
Discourses on the Rectitude of Human Nature. By Rev. G. W. Burnap, D.D.

Manuals for Sunday Schools.

First Book for Sunday Schools.
Channing's Catechism. 11th edition.
The Worcester Association's Catechism. 16th edit.
The Christian's Catechism. By L. G. Pray. 2d edit. improved.
Child's Book on the Soul. By Rev. T. H. Gallaudet.
Cartee's Questions on the New Testament. Parts 1 and 2.
Allen's Questions on the Four Evangelists and the Acts. Parts 1, 2, and 3.
Ministry of Christ. By Rev. T. B. Fox.
The Acts of the Apostles. By the same.
Lessons on the Parables. By Rev. F. D. Huntington.
Scripture Catechism of the Christian Religion. By Rev. E. Peabody.
Scripture Truths, in Questions and Answers.
Allen's Questions on Genesis.
Bible Biography. Old and New Testaments.
Abstract of Sacred History.
Nichols's Natural Theology.
Hymn and Service Book. By Hon. S. C. Phillips.
Sunday School Hymn Book, with Devotional Exercises. By L. G. Pray.
The Saviour's Life, written expressly for Children and Youth. By Rev. Edwin Chapman, of England.
The Gospel Narratives; their Origin, Peculiarities, and Transmission. By Rev. H. A. Miles.
A Manual of Christian Doctrines. By Rev. A. B. Fuller.
Introductory Lessons on Christian Evidences. By Archbishop Whately.

REPORT.

The Sunday School Society, in presenting its Twenty-second Annual Report, would devoutly thank God for his smiles on the labors of the past year.

In the last three Annual Reports, the Secretary has endeavoured to direct public attention to three points vitally connected with the interests of Sunday Schools.

The *first* of these Reports maintained the wisdom and expediency of teaching the Christian doctrines *systematically*, in order to give to all pupils a clear and connected view of gospel-truths, arranged as they were in Christ's mind. The specific doctrines of Christianity were asserted to have the same relation to its moral precepts that bones have to the rest of the body.

The *second* treated of that fundamental error of this century, which bestows methodically upon the *intellect* of children nearly the whole care and labor of week-day instruction, leaving their *moral* powers to the accidents and uncertainties of casual culture. The system is set forth as doing injustice to the intellect, and also as threatening final peril to the State. To prevent making intellectual giants and moral dwarfs by such a system, and to commend an harmonious, safe development of *all* the capabilities of youth, the Christian nurture of the Sunday School was strongly urged.

The *third* took for its subject the "Family," as the natural ally of the Sunday School; and the position, aptitudes, and duties of parents were particularly considered.

These three Reports having pointed out the central error in the popular systems of common education, and urged the reform which is demanded by the nature of the soul, and then named the agents who can consummate the glorious work; this, the *fourth* Report, will occupy itself with statistics, showing the number, growth, and condition of our Sunday Schools; together with such extracts from the letters of pastors, superintendents, and female teachers, as will disclose a full and clear view of present ideas in this great field of spiritual labor.

While we thank those pastors and superintendents who have promptly and cheerfully answered the questions proposed by the Committee, we much lament that some have withheld all information, thus far depriving us of the important data on which our reasonings should rest. It is the strong wish of thousands of Christian hearts to know what *should* be done, what *can* be done, what *has* been done, in the Sunday Schools. We can answer these questions only by having a full report of facts, and a careful statement of opinions, from those who know. The statistical tables, published herewith, may reveal our true place in the array of moral forces, while they help to show how far these forces can be relied on hereafter.

A few facts, connected with these tables, should be stated.

To the second question of the Circular, "*How many pupils have joined the church during the last year?*" there were in many cases full and gratifying replies; but there were so many who refused to answer the question, because they deemed it improper, that we have suppressed

all reports on the point. For similar reasons, some have refused to answer the third question, "*How many of your teachers are members of the church?*" The Report, therefore, which we publish, is only a partial representation of all the facts in this case. In the remaining data, we trust, there is a reliable accuracy, although some reports omitted facts which we were anxious to know. We have supplied such deficiencies, where we could with known precision; leaving, nevertheless, many important chasms.

The questions of the Circular were the following: —

1. How many pupils in your school during the last year? What the average of their ages?
2. How many pupils have joined the church during the last year?
3. How many teachers in your school? Of these, how many are members of the church?
4. Is it difficult to procure good teachers? If so, why?
5. Have you teachers' meetings? How often?
6. How many books in your Sunday School library?
7. During what part of the year is your school kept?
8. Do parents generally take an interest in the school?
9. Do you teach the Christian doctrines systematically?
10. What influence do you think the Sunday School has had upon the community?
11. What will give greater power and usefulness to our Sunday Schools?

STATISTICAL RETURNS.

Names of Towns.	No. of Pupils.	Average Age.	No. of Teach.	Teach. Mem. of Ch.	Books.	Time kept.
Albany	38	12	7	7	130	year.
Andover, North .	125	12	14	6	250	year.
Ashby	120	14	16	9	800	year.
Athol	162	14	17	4	465	year.
Augusta, Me. . .	75	11	10	4	60	year.
Bangor	110	11	16		500	8 mo.
Barnstable	50	12	12	4	200	year.
Barre	110	12	15	6	192	8 mo.
Bedford	45	10	10	5	130	6 mo.
Belfast	60	12	11	7	700	6 mo.
Beverly	200	11	30	10	600	8 mo.
Billerica	24	10	6	6	250	6 mo.
Bolton	72	12	11	5	620	6 mo.
Boston, 2d Church .	83	10	15	12	400	year.
,, King's Chap.	38	10	7			5 mo.
,, Brattle Squ.	70	13	15	10	450	8 mo.
,, New North .	104	12	19	6	300	year.
,, Federal-st. .	60	12	11		300	8 mo.
,, Hollis-street	52	8	13	5	275	10 mo.
,, West . . .	120	11	20	15	400	year.
,, Hawes Place	70	10	12	4	300	year.
,, Bulfinch Pl.	326	11	35	19	800	year.
,, 12th Cong. .	125	10	28	14	400	year.
,, 13th Cong. .	60	11	15	8	590	9 mo.
,, S. Cong. .	180	12	27		650	year.
,, Ch. Disciples	99	9	19	18	328	year.
,, Ch. Saviour	93	12	17	17		8 mo.
,, East . . .	80	11	11	8	200	10 mo.
,, Pitts-street .	300	13	50	33	600	year.
,, Suffolk-st. .	175	10	25	13	350	year.
,, Warren-st. .	600	13	38		1600	year.
Brattleborough, Vt.	42	10	10	5	300	6 mo.
Bridgewater . . .	88	10	15	3	411	6 mo.
,, East .	192	12	21	5	200	year.
,, West .	100	12	20	6	300	6 mo.
Brighton	157	12	23	12	783	year.
Brooklyn, Conn. .	70	12	17	15	500	year.
Amount carried up	4475	419	658	301	15334	

Names of Towns.	No. of Pupils.	Average Age.	No. of Teach.	Teach. Mem. of Ch.	Books.	Time kept.
Amount brought up	4475	419	658	301	15334	
Brooklyn, N.Y. . .	120	12	20	14	750	10 mo.
Buffalo, N.Y. . . .	120	11	20	7	250	year.
Burlington, Vt. . .	78	11	15	8	625	year.
Cambridge . . .	129	11	25	14	850	year.
,, Lee-street	82	10	14	12	500	year.
,, East . .	65	11	14		*350	year.
Cambridgeport . .	120	12	20	15	400	year.
Charleston, S.C. . .	55	10	13	4	200	year.
Charlestown . . .	313	11	44	20	1116	year.
,, N.H. .	51	10	11	4	350	year.
Chelsea	75	9	12	3	300	8 mo.
,, Robbins . .	40	9	10	5	175	year.
Chicopee	60	11	14	12	400	year.
Cohasset	140	12	26	14	300	year.
Concord	144	11	15	8	600	year.
,, N.H. . .	115	14	17	11	400	6 mo.
Dedham, 1st . . .	105	11	17	5	850	year.
Deerfield	75	11	16	16	300	6 mo.
Dighton	23	12	4	1	350	8 mo.
Dorchester, 1st . .	175	10	25	15	400	6 mo.
Dover	115	9	15	7	300	year.
Dublin, N.H. . .	154	13	24	11	1835	6 mo.
Duxbury	95	10	14		500	6 mo.
Eastport, Me. . . .	111	10	25	5	250	year.
Elgin, Ill.	40	9	8	5	100	9 mo.
Fairhaven	90	11	20	7	570	year.
Fall River	105	10	16	5	480	year.
Fitchburg	184	12	28	17	558	year.
Fitzwilliam, N.H. .	100	14	18	9	450	6 mo.
Framingham . . .	75	10	13	5	225	6 mo.
Gloucester . . .	84	9	13	8	150	year.
Grafton	82	10	13	8	200	6 mo.
Greenfield . . .	25	10	5	2	200	year.
Groton	80	9	13	5	270	year.
Hallowell, Me. . .	94	10	13	7	650	year.
Hampton Falls, N.H.	20	10	5	4	200	6 mo.
Hartford, Conn. . .	33	9	7	4	130	year.
Hingham, Richardson	156	13	21	9	600	7 mo.
,, Stearns .	50	10	11	5	500	6 mo.
Hubbardston . . .	158	12	21	9	300	8 mo.
Keene, N.H. . . .	102	10	21	12	600	6 mo.
Kingston	69	12	9		450	6 mo.
Lancaster	162	12	19	13	374	6 mo.
Amount carried over	8744	882	1362	646	34692	

Names of Towns.	No. of Pupils.	Average Age.	No. of Teach.	Teach. Mem. of Ch.	Books.	Time kept.
Amount brought over	8744	882	1362	646	34692	
Lawrence	70	10	8	2	200	year.
Leicester	25	8	6	4	300	6 mo.
Leominster . . .	294	10	38	23	1000	8 mo.
Lexington	76	10	12	6	630	8 mo.
,, East . .	55	10	12	3	300	7 mo.
Lincoln	45	10	8	7	250	6 mo.
Littleton	100	13	14	11	300	year.
Louisville, Ken. . .	92	10	11	7	250	year.
Lowell, Miles . .	130	11	20	4	350	year.
,, Barry . .	165	10	27	7	200	year.
Lunenburg . . .	70	12	13	4	100	year.
Lynn	115	10	18		450	year.
Manchester, N.H. .	85	12	9	7	290	year.
Marblehead . . .	210	10	34	10	200	year.
Marlborough . . .	130	9	24	6	200	8 mo.
Marshfield . . .	71	12	14	6	250	year.
Meadville, Penn. .	71	10	15	10	200	year.
Medfield	60	10	12	6	400	6 mo.
Medford	90	11	12	6	620	year.
Milton	90	11	15		800	6 mo.
Montreal, Can. . .	35	11	8	8	250	year.
Nashua, N.H. . .	88	11	12	6	350	year.
New Bedford, Weiss	120	11	14	4	500	year.
,, Thomas	105	10	13	12	308	year.
New York, Bellows .	134	12	18	14	400	10 mo.
,, Osgood .	149	10	24	10	500	10 mo.
Newport, R.I. . .	75	9	16	6	467	year.
Newton, West . .	40	12	6	2	100	year.
Northampton . . .	28	13	6	6	456	year.
Northborough . .	120	10	17	15	450	7 mo.
Northumberland, Pa.	20	9	2	1	60	year.
Norton	70	12	11	7	400	6 mo.
Pembroke	85	10	20	9	300	6 mo.
Pepperell	90	12	12	6	150	6 mo.
Petersham	153	12	21	9	300	8 mo.
Plymouth	146	12	16		400	
Pomfret, Vt. . . .	26	9	5	5	110	6 mo.
Portland, Nichols .	120	12	30	25	600	year.
,, Cutler . .	115	10	24	10	455	year.
Portsmouth, N.H. .	210	12	40	20	269	year.
Providence, Hall .	160	11	32	24	450	year.
,, Hedge .	137	11	33	14	1184	year.
Quincy	161	12	31	7	440	year.
,, Ill. . . .	77	8	9	5	350	year.
Amount carried up	13252	1352	2104	1000	51231	

Names of Towns.	No. of Pupils.	Average Age.	No. of Teach.	Teach. Mem. of Ch.	Books.	Time kept.
Amount brought up	13252	1352	2104	1000	51231	
Roxbury, Putnam .	120	12	15	10	400	6 mo.
,, Reynolds .	98	11	16		350	6 mo.
,, Alger . .	80	11	17	5		year.
Saco, Maine . . .	128	12	19	12	425	year.
Salem, Flint . . .	60	10	16	3	200	year.
,, Frothingham	65		12	4	500	year.
,, Thompson .	75	11	15	6	600	year.
Scituate, Nute . .	69	9	10	4	185	6 mo.
,, Stetson .	61	10	16		250	
Sharon	57	12	8	2	150	6 mo.
Shirley	80	10	13	9	642	6 mo.
Springfield . . .	75	10	14	7	30	year.
Sterling	222	12	37	26	767	year.
Stowe	130	12	23	15	550	year.
St. Louis, Mi. . .	188	9	28	19	800	year.
Standish, Me. . .	35	10	9	2	275	6 mo.
Sudbury	50	10	10	3	150	6 mo.
Taunton	200	12	40	27	850	9 mo.
Templeton	110	16	18	14	500	year.
Thomaston, Me. . .	25	10	5		125	6 mo.
Topsham, Me. . .	40	11	6		250	6 mo.
Troy, N.Y. . . .	30	12	6	4	200	year.
Tyngsborough . .	40	12	10	3	350	7 mo.
Upton	129	10	11	3	new sc.	year.
Uxbridge	96	13	12	7	800	year.
Vernon, N.Y. . .	30	8	5	4	500	year.
Walpole, N.H. . .	80	10	12	8	250	6 mo.
Waltham	140	11	26	6	320	10 mo.
Warwick	108	12	18	5	400	6 mo.
Washington, D.C. .	23	9	8		175	year.
Watertown . . .	125	11	17	8	500	year.
Wayland	53	12	9	4	215	year.
West Cambridge .	80	10	14	9	250	year.
Westford	64	12	11	6	500	6 mo.
Weston	50	12	10	2	300	7 mo.
Woburn	80	11	8	2	160	
Worcester, Hill . .	150	11	25	13	burnd.	year.
,, Hale . .	48	11	10	10		year.
Total	16546	1759	2663	1262	64150	

The whole number of Sunday Schools connected with our Society is 236. We have received reports from 162 of this number; and they contain 16,546 pupils and 2,663

teachers. The average age is $10\frac{1}{16}\frac{3}{2}\frac{5}{2}$. The number of teachers who are members of the church is 1,262. The number of books in the Sunday School libraries is 64,150. The schools, which keep through the year, are 91. The average number of pupils to each school would be about 102. Now, taking the 75 schools, which have not been reported, we shall find they contain, in all, the number of 7,650; which sum, added to the number reported to us, will make the large total of 24,196 pupils now under Christian culture in our Sunday Schools.

We would next give, in their order, the replies which we have received to the other questions of the Circular; selecting those which present the fairest specimen of the various opinions and wishes of the writers. Each paragraph contains a separate testimony, and in the exact words of the author. Neither the Committee nor the Sunday School Society hold themselves responsible for the opinions expressed in the replies. The most opposite sentiments and wishes are reported, because they exist. At each answer the reader is supposed to have the question present before his mind.

Ques. IV. "*Is it difficult to procure good teachers? If so, why?*"

"It is difficult to procure good teachers; and it is about *as* difficult to assign a good reason for it. We should bear in mind, that 'labors of love,' in every community, are usually performed by a few; and these few are generally not persons of wealth or leisure."

"It is easy to procure competent and devoted female teachers; but not so of male."

"It is difficult, and for three reasons: 1. Lack of interest; 2. Lack of qualifications; 3. Inconvenience of being from home during school-hours. Why should we

commit the young to the hands of almost any one we can get to take a class in a Sunday School, when we would not in a day-school? Is not the spiritual culture of the young more important than their intellectual training? But we must do the best we can under the circumstances, and I think an imperfect Sunday School is better than none."

"I superintend my Sunday School," says a pastor, "and always address the scholars upon some important point of faith or practice."

"Good teachers become disheartened by the lack of parental sympathy and co-operation."

"Want of culture in the willing, want of will and piety in the otherwise gifted."

"Of female teachers we say, no: of male we say, yes. Gentlemen tell us, that, being confined all the week to business, they wish to be free on Sunday!"

"Who can profitably instruct without an inward Christian experience?"

"Who can teach that which he has never learned?"

"Yes; because it presents no field for the ambitious worldling."

"I have been superintendent of my own school," says a pastor, "and consider this the best arrangement for myself and the school. Only thus do I feel in a proper relation to the children and the teachers."

"It is difficult to find those who possess that deep interest in religious truth which will enable them to awaken a corresponding interest in their pupils. The reading and information of some are circumscribed; and they are unable to present that variety of illustration which imparts a charm to the teachings of others, and which renders it so easy to excite tender emotions, and also to furnish fit materials for reflection."

"I have found that they who are acquainted with the New Testament delight to teach its truths; and *vice versa.*"

"Our teachers are intelligent and devoted; and most of them are parents."

"An irregular, uninterested, unsympathizing teacher is worse than none."

"Yes; because several, who should teach, think they must go home immediately after service."

"No: we can always find a sufficient number of both sexes, and of good qualifications, who are ever ready to serve the school."

"Yes; and many refuse, not because they are ashamed of their ignorance, but because they are ashamed of *showing* it."

"We think that a person, who is unwilling to take a class, lacks the first qualification of a good teacher."

"Some of our teachers have been irregular in their attendance; and their classes have been broken up in consequence."

"There should be prayer-meetings for this object."

"It is because of diffidence, of indifference, of no faith in ability, unwillingness to make any self-sacrifice, dread of responsibility."

Ques. V. "*Have you teachers' meetings?*"

The answers to this question are comparatively few, and in the monosyllables *yes* and *no*. Most of the teachers have stated meetings, and some speak of them as the life-spring and motive power of the Sunday School.

"Yes; and we attribute our success to the full and clear explanations, which our minister each week gives us, of the lessons we are to teach."

"We have Bible classes of young men and young women preparing to become teachers."

"We have no one to inspire us; we have little sympathy, and therefore are irregular in attendance. We perish for lack of vision."

"Our teachers' meetings are conducted by some one of our teachers."

"Poor children are clothed by our 'Teachers' Sewing Circle,' and many are brought into our school who were never in a church before."

"Teachers live so far apart that they cannot get together oftener than once in two months."

"We should like to get up a ministry to poor children, as you have in Boston."

"Last summer, union meetings of the pastors, superintendents, and teachers of the several Sunday Schools connected with the three contiguous religious societies of our faith, were held; sometimes at the different meeting-houses, and sometimes at a place central to all three. The happiest results follow these re-unions."

Ques. VIII. "*Do parents generally take an interest in the Sunday School?*"

To this question the negative answers far outnumber the affirmative. It is sad to learn, from such authentic sources, that parents seem blind to the high agencies of the Sabbath School.

"Of the parents, who together send 150 pupils, not five of these parents ever stepped into our school."

"No; because the spirit of mammon possesses them, and they follow where the spirit leads."

"They *feel* an interest, and that's all."

"Nothing is so much needed among us as an energetic co-operation of parents and teachers."

"No; because they have so little in their own spiritual improvement."

"If they did, our number of pupils might be doubled."

"A few take a true Christ-like interest; many, a general interest; but the majority, no interest at all."

A superintendent in a distant state says, "There seems a lamentable and almost universal deficiency in the interest taken by heads of families in the religious education of their children."

A pastor mourns thus: "I cannot make my people do any thing in the matter. They make me do all."

"I wish some parents would take as much interest in the growth of their children's souls as they daily take in the growth of their young trees."

"Parental apathy! This depresses the zeal of teachers more than any one thing. Some mothers take an interest; but most fathers regard it with indifference."

"A Sunday School is the expression of the general spiritual life of the congregation."

"We think they do; because they contribute liberally, and their children come regularly, and often ask, with anxious solicitude, if all is going on well. We wish they would visit the school: this fact would make teachers' and pupils' hearts leap for joy."

"They feel as deep an interest in it as they do in the common school."

"Parents form classes among themselves, and take their place in the Sunday School."

"Some parents go over the lessons with their children before they go to the Sunday School."

"Yes; so much so, that we have a Bible class of about fifty under the systematic instruction of the pastor."

"Many parents manifest the deepest interest; they visit the school; they see that their children are always punctual, and they help them in their preparation."

"Parents should know the teachers, and talk freely with them about their children."

"Where the natural energies of Sunday Schools have been crippled, and their high promise unredeemed, the blame must rest mainly on parents and pastors."

Ques. IX. "*Do you teach the Christian doctrines systematically?*"

To this question the replies are very various. The general tenor of them is, that most teachers approve of such a course; but they have not the requisite manuals. Very few object to teaching doctrines.

"We teach the characteristic doctrines of the New Testament to all our older classes."

"We endeavor to teach the Christian doctrines systematically; and the pupils love such teaching."

"We have made a great mistake as a sect in not taking an interest in our specific doctrines."

"Our teachers have agreed to make the whole system of instruction more systematic."

"We teach doctrines; for example, the doctrine of repentance from dead works, of faith towards God, of baptism, of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."

"I am convinced of the importance of teaching the doctrines, as our denomination understands them. We intend to devote a large portion of the coming year to such instruction. I have been more and more persuaded of the need of such a course in these days."

"I am engaged in a doctrinal course with an advanced class."

"Our children are so ignorant of our specific doctrines that they are not only indifferent to them, but are easily led off to any other sect. We are continually cut into by

this condition." "In addresses to the school, there is a summary of Christian doctrine given."

"Doctrinal teaching is engaging to young minds." "Doctrine is taught according to the age of the pupil."

"We pursue a regular system of moral and religious instruction."

"Yes; as systematically as the New Testament."

"Yes: we are trying earnestly to do so; and we have no faith in any school which does not desire more system than any of us have as yet attained."

"The course of instruction has varied in different years. The present year the teachers are going through the New Testament in course. The teachers' meetings are devoted to comments on that portion which is to occupy the next two Sundays. Last year the same course was pursued with part of the Old Testament."

"Many approve strongly of systematic doctrinal teaching; and none here say aught against it."

"Here, we think, is one of the great defects. There is little or no system. Instruction is hap-hazard. Each teacher takes her method, which oftentimes is no method at all. No well-defined plan is present in the teacher's mind; therefore, no definite good is aimed at, and none reached."

"Few teachers can teach systematically."

"Some approach to consecutive teaching has been made in our school during the past year."

"Cannot the Christian doctrines be arranged systematically, so that the child's mind may pass from one to the next, and at last attain a clear view of the whole series? What more desirable?"

"We have suffered greatly from not having proper manuals of systematic doctrinal instruction."

"We need a manual which shall exhibit a complete sys-

tem of Christian doctrines, suggestive in its details, and adapted to the progressive stages of religious nurture."

"We want a doctinal catechism; and better books for our libraries."

"No; we let each teacher take his own mode. I would leave doctrines till children are grown up."

"Lectures by the pastor or superintendent may answer all the purposes of dogmatic theology."

"Those teachers who use the Bible alone are the most successful."

"No; because for the last twenty years there has been little systematic teaching of Christian doctrines in our pulpits. Those persons, therefore, who are now between 25 and 45 years of age are comparatively ignorant of the distinctive doctrines of Christianity, as we profess them, and they are proportionally unconcerned about their inculcation."

Ques. X. "*What influence do you think the Sunday School has had on the community?*"

On this question, the whole diversity of opinion seems to pertain to the kinds and degrees of good which it is acknowledged the Sunday Schools produce. All testimonies conspire to prove them a timely and unmixed good to the Christian church and the political commonwealth.

"They help to conserve public morals, and elevate public sentiment."

"By spreading good books through poor families, they increase Bible-knowledge and prevent crime."

"The books carried home act as missionaries in the family."

"They prevent the profanation of the Lord's day."

"Much every way. The Sunday School institution has been so long in operation, that most of the active part of

the adult population participated in its benefits in their childhood; and, if there be any virtue or advantage in *early impressions*, we may confidently look for their results here."

"Incalculable influence for good."

The Sunday School patriarch of Portsmouth, New Hampshire (who has now one female teacher in his school, who entered with him thirty-two years ago, and has never intermitted her labors) says, "Thirty years of experience has *somewhat* cooled the ardor of our early hopes as to the amount of *visible* influence or the *rapid* effect of Sunday Schools; but our faith in their *constant* good influence is unabated, and indeed *strengthened*."

"It has sent an elevating influence into the secular schools."

"It awakens thought in regard to the true education of the young."

"Some of the fruits are, a kind of fraternal feeling among the pupils of the school; an increased love of reading; an interest in Bible-subjects; greater regularity at church, and a kindling up of youthful devotion."

"It has revealed to many minds the need of a Saviour, and Christ has been made precious to many souls."

"It has instilled religious and moral truth into the minds of children; it has trained them to reverence the Sabbath and the sanctuary; has greatly increased the attendance upon public worship; has furnished suitable reading to the pupils; has been a signal benefit to teachers, and in many ways a durable blessing to the community."

"The attendance of the Sunday School scholars at the school, on rainy days, is greater proportionably than the attendance of adults at the church."

"It has saved many parents through the instrumentality of their children."

"It has done much in bringing the children of heathen-

ish parents under religious influences. It has brought many to a sense of their sin, and their need of forgiveness. It will continue to be a most powerful auxiliary in bringing young persons into membership in the churches of Christ, and in securing the personal experience of vital religion."

"More young persons join the church than formerly."

"I look upon the Sunday School as one of the most powerful means of christianizing the world. In regard to it, I think that ministers make a fatal mistake in considering it of secondary importance in their official duties. If the world is ever to be regenerated, it must be by keeping the children *in* the kingdom into which they are born."

"It is moulding the character of the rising generation in our town more than any other single institution. We would sooner give up the church than the Sunday School."

"In the West, Sabbath Schools are of peculiar value. For the establishing of a religious society, one of the most efficient means, if not the most important move to make, would be to establish a Sunday School. People will pay for this who will pay for nothing else."

"The Sunday Schools have failed in answering the expectations of their early founder."

"Good, bad, indifferent, according to the character of the school."

"We think no religious society can be prosperous, or even sustained, without a respectable Sunday School."

From Missouri, we have these words: "I would rather dispense with half the religious exercises of the church than close the Sunday School."

"We have one class of young ladies who have been under the same teacher nine years."

"Within the last ten years, fifty-one of our pupils have become teachers. Nineteen of these are now in our school.

Between fifty and sixty have been admitted to the church, within the last ten years, who have been pupils."

Ques. XI. "*What will give greater power and usefulness to our Sunday Schools?*"

This important question has drawn forth a great many mature opinions; but almost every letter contained these two answers: first, a "livelier interest on the part of parents;" and, second, "more competent teachers."

"An intelligent co-operation of teachers, parents, and pastor."

"Greater interest on the part of parents and guardians; wider information and warmer piety on that of teachers; a more constant and faithful oversight on that of the pastor."

"Teachers who have been more with Jesus."

"To have parents care as much about the *eternal* interest of their children as they now do about their *temporal*."

"Deeper interest on the part of clergymen."

"We will specify four: 1. Greater devotedness in their friends. 2. More freedom of communication between teachers and scholars. 3. More systematic instruction. And 4. Greater stress laid on personal religion."

"A higher devotional spirit in the teachers; a greater attention to the inculcation of *reverence;* a more frequent and solemn appeal to the *sanctions* of the gospel; a larger number of religious parents among the teachers; a juster estimate among our clergy of the importance and power of these schools; and hence more systematic and efficient endeavors to make them what they should be."

"I should say, above all, more spiritual life in the teachers, — a self-consecration, not to this work merely, but to truth and right, to Christ and God; in other words, a spiritual life, *the life of God within.* I do not

believe in getting young persons into the Sunday School, of thoughtless minds and unformed principles, in the hope of converting them through the influences of their work upon themselves. I think great, very great harm has been done in this way to our schools."

"Teachers who feel themselves to be ambassadors for Christ, to lead children to God. Let them visit the parents of their pupils, and try to win into the Sunday School those children whose parents never attend public worship."

"A deeper interest in the community. Parishes must feel that the Sunday School is a parish school, and not merely the school of the minister and a few pious females."

"To be continued at least ten months of each year. To have a committee of ladies appointed, by the church or parish, to visit, during the recess, the several families belonging to the congregation, to take the names of all the children who are willing to join the school, and to see if there be any who need assistance in regard to clothing, &c. and to make report of all facts touching the interests of Sunday School instruction."

"The fostering care of the professed followers of Jesus. Were the members of the church to consider the Sunday School as an object of their most tender regard, its power and usefulness would be very greatly extended. More parents as teachers."

"That faith in early spiritual culture which will bring the richest minds and the best hearts of the community into the rank of teachers."

"More love for the soul of childhood, and more faith in Christ as coming into that soul."

"I hope you will infuse a warmer spirit into our clergymen on the subject of Sunday Schools. They do not talk or pray or work or love half enough. Other denominations are in advance of us in this respect."

"It is our impression, that, to give our Sunday Schools the greatest power and usefulness, there must be a reform, a radical reform, in at least three respects: 1. The parents' interest in the work; 2. The preparation of the teachers; and 3. A systematic conduct of the lessons."

"To have children continued longer in them; the formation of adult classes; to persuade parents to become pupils as well as teachers; to see old and young sitting together at the feet of Jesus; to induce the congregation to 'resolve itself into a committee of the whole' on the subject, and become one great Sunday School. But, perhaps, this is only answering the question tautologically, instead of logically. Next to good simple-souled teachers, we think such auxiliary motives as a choice library, maps, pictures, &c. of great importance. I like the plan of making the Sunday Schools missionary societies to the poor, ignorant, and vicious children in the places where they are established, that is, ministries at large, *in small*."

"A more systematic and complete plan of instruction, assuming more the positive in doctrine and precept."

"Greater punctuality, and especially regularity in the attendance of teachers."

"A regular course of religious and doctrinal instruction by the pastor, as in a college."

"More ample illustrations from science, natural history, and biography."

"1. More interest in them on the part of pastors. 2. More preparation and piety in the teachers. 3. A less mechanical system of instruction. 4. Devoting, instead of a hurried hour in the morning, or a crowded hour at noon, or a wearied hour after all the services of the day, a full and strong half-day to them, if possible, each Sabbath, but at least once a month, when parents and all interested might be invited to be present, and the pastor the

chief superintendent. 5. A better system of teachers' meetings than I am acquainted with, by which they should be to the Sunday School what the normal school is to the secular. I would have a minister settled over the Sunday School as much as over the parish; for in ten years the well-taught Sunday School will become the most valuable part of his parish."

"The pastor should know and recognize the pupils, and by his real solicitude convince them that he has a deeper concern than a professional one in their spiritual welfare."

"To most children's minds, their minister represents the Christian religion: if, therefore, they find that the minister feels no interest in them, then they will conclude that Christianity feels no interest in them. And do not many teachers share with children the same idea?"

"The occasional examination of the several classes by the minister."

"To have connected with them a communion-service for the children. We believe there are no persons who would be more benefited by this service than the children of our Sunday Schools. The service would quicken their love for Christ, and make religion a positive fact in the soul."

"To have young persons, from sixteen to twenty-five years of age, in it. We have thirty of such in our school, and they are the most punctual and interested members."

"Less book-teaching, and a more direct setting-forth of the true principles of life, by means of the general lesson and the conversation of the teacher."

"Books of more attractive religious character, and a closer sympathy between different Sunday Schools."

"Earnest and continual prayer by parents, by churches, and by pastors."

"A frequent recognition of the Sunday School in the

stated prayers of the sanctuary, and occasional strong appeals in the sermon."

"An intelligent, wakeful, pious, superintendent will, of himself, pour the breath of spiritual life into a Sunday School; while one of an opposite character will do much to take all spiritual life out of it."

"We have an annual Christmas festival, which has always proved an occasion of great happiness to all connected with the school. It brings together our whole society in a spontaneous and good-natured gathering; and the happy influence of it is felt through the year."

"Annual celebrations." "Systematic lectures." "A child's religious newspaper." "Valuable Christian libraries." "A Sunday School itinerant missionary." "A normal school for teachers."

After these numerous and interesting extracts, we would leave the great subject with the friends of the cause, hoping that new and improved modes may be the happy result. Many valuable suggestions have been omitted, only for want of space. With a few miscellaneous remarks we would close our report.

It is evident that the great mass of our people do *not* comprehend the nature, aims, or agency of the Sunday School. There seems, on the part of many parents, to be an obtuseness, so great that we fear a new special revelation would hardly remove it. So slight is the interest expressed by one or two pastors, that, should we read their letters to their Sunday School teachers, it would be like a shower of ice on an angel's heart! When our churches feel an interest in the Sunday School like that which a provident farmer feels in the condition of his nursery, then a new and sacred power will be given to this spiritual agency. That congregation which under-

stands most thoroughly the doctrines of our Christian faith will most relish the preaching of our ministers; and they are they who are believers in the spiritual powers of childhood, and who are most zealous in sustaining Sunday Schools. A man who thinks little of the susceptibilities of children will think little of Sunday Schools. To neglect them is to invite drought to seize upon the fountain.

System. — Almost every writer recommends the adoption of more systematic teaching; and we would ask, if there be not as much need of system and gradation and classification in a Sunday School as in a common district school. We wish that a convention, composed of delegates from all our Christian congregations, could be gathered, whose aim it should be to take the whole subject of Sunday Schools under mature deliberation, and organize a complete system, as efficient as that of a college or grammar school. Such a convention, sitting for a week, would arrest public attention, and might haply discover some mind who would do, in the department of Sunday School books, what Sir Walter Scott did in the department of novels.

Ministry to the Poor. — In Boston, the children of our Sunday Schools have united to support a missionary to poor children in the city. This missionary has "gone out into the highways," and brought in the naked, and clothed them; the hungry, and fed them; the ignorant, and taught them; the wicked, and saved them. God's blessing has rested on his labors; and we think that as much good has been done to those who give as to them who receive. The female pupils of one school meet once a fortnight to make clothes for the destitute. Whosoever shall give to one of these little sufferers a cup of cold water, in the name of Christ, shall in no wise lose her

reward. We hail with joy this ministry to the poor, because many parents do not "*bring* up their children:" they *drag them up!* Their children have no youth, no young dreams, but are broken at once into the iron realities of life. The increase of juvenile delinquency is astounding. It is Christianity alone which can radically reform these evils. Amid the destructive lightnings of youthful passions, there is nothing but the heaven-directed rod of religion which will conduct these fires safely to the ground. Would that we could turn the erring feet of every young truant to the Sunday School, where we could win him to the paths of knowledge and safety, instead of leaving him to the exhortations of a prison-chaplain, and the occasional sympathy of an official visitor to his cell! How happy should we be, if, in the very blush of life's morning, we could always hail the coming of the "Sun of Righteousness"!

Teachers. — As is the teacher, so is the school, everywhere and always. We can no more have good schools without good teachers, than we can have effects without causes. We rejoice that we have so large a number of intelligent and pious teachers. We welcome them to their field of sacred beneficence. We thank them for what they have done in Christ's cause, and would urge them to go on unto perfection. We would recommend their talking much with the pupils of their class; for nothing moves the soul of childhood so deeply as the living voice of an earnest spirit in direct and familiar conversation. Soul meets soul; and the teacher reproduces himself in his pupil.

Encouragements. — All our returns testify to the positive good that Sunday Schools are doing. Who can tell how much evil they have prevented? It is said, that scarcely a convict can be found who has had a Sunday

School education. Some schools have kept a careful record of the character and success of their pupils; and one example may suffice for all. They testify, that, out of all the children who, through twenty years, have gone from their school, only three have become vicious! Our schools have nearly double the number of pupils they had ten years ago; and it is, every season, easier than formerly to engage competent teachers. Twenty-two years, instead of revealing any symptoms of elementary weakness in our system, have witnessed such a gradual increase of numbers and power and usefulness, that we may now say, that the Sunday School, as an ally of the family and the pulpit, has taken its place among the indispensable agents of Christian education.

We believe there is sufficient power in gospel motives to direct a child heavenward, as it starts on its endless career. Believing, also, that every child at birth is a fair, unsullied thing, fresh from the hands of God, with no felon-mark upon its soul, yet capable of receiving either the demon-brand of sin or the angel-stamp of virtue, we are filled with a sacred anxiety concerning its first impressions. Relying on God's grace to second every honest endeavor, we will not rest while one child remains an outcast from the school of Christ. Oh that our community could come to a clear apprehension of the solemn fact, that *all durable reform, and all permanent prosperity, must have their mainspring in the formative periods of childhood and youth!* Let every parent, teacher, and pastor, take courage. When a generation which has been Christianized in childhood shall have grown up to controlling power in society, then we may expect the glorious reflex action on the Sunday School. Grant that we are now struggling through a period of darkness, stupidity, and sin, should this discourage a servant of the Lord?

Surely not. Let him remember that education in the wilderness prepared the chosen people for their promised land. Let us, then, while we walk by faith, labor in hope, and never despair.

In the name of that divine Saviour who was a *Teacher* sent from God, and who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven;" who took those children in his arms, and prayed over them and blessed them; and who has left on record for *us* this high command, "FEED MY LAMBS;" — in the name of that Saviour, we invoke Heaven's richest benediction on our Sunday Schools.

CHARLES BROOKS,

Corresponding Secretary.

BOSTON, *May* 29, 1850.

THE

CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATE AGENTS

HAS PRESENTED

THE FOLLOWING REPORT.

The associate agents of the Sunday School Society have made an unusual number of visits to Sunday Schools, conventions, rural gatherings, and other occasions suited to their labors, since the last anniversary; and have much satisfaction in reporting, as the result of their observations, that a growing attention is given by our denomination to Sabbath School instruction; and its importance, as a nursery of the church, is more and more felt and acknowledged.

Returns from some of the agents have not been received, and but incomplete ones from a few of the others. Sufficient information, however, has been furnished to show that great fidelity and devotedness have characterized the body; and much good, it is reasonably hoped, has been effected by their ministrations.

A wide field has been traversed by two or three of our number, whose vocations have called them to visit remote parts of our country and Canada; and they have gladly availed themselves of the opportunity of doing what they could to promote the cause in which they had engaged for this Society. Hence many thousand miles have been travelled, and many thousand persons addressed and interested, by them, and by the other agents, in the course of their official visits. Numerous tracts and other small

works have been distributed, and the good seed of the word has been most extensively sown.

Numerous gratifying testimonials have been received of the beneficial effects of the labors of the agents in various quarters; and they enter upon the duties of the new Sunday School year with avidity, hope, and confidence; offering their official aid to all who are engaged in the moral and religious education of the young, for any occasion on which it may be needed or desired.

The returns which have been made furnish the following facts: —

Rev. F. W. Holland has visited and addressed Sunday Schools in Cambridge, Upton, Lunenburg, in Mass.; Concord, N.H.; Augusta, Me.; Burlington, Vt.; Baltimore, Md.; Washington, D.C.; Buffalo, N.Y.; Wheeling, Va.; Louisville, Ky.; Cannelton, Ind.; Quincy, Ill.; St. Louis, Mo.; and Montreal, Can.; besides establishing ("starting") twelve or more Sunday Schools in the various parts of our country. Many other schools in the West would have been visited, had they been in session at the season of the year when he was in their neighborhood.

Rev. Charles Brooks has visited and addressed seven schools in this city; likewise, schools in Charlestown, Cambridgeport, Beverly, Westborough, Ware, Greenfield, Bernardston, Deerfield, Warwick, Rowe, Dorchester, and Northampton, Mass.; Burlington, Vt.; and Montreal, Can.; besides making eight addresses, additional, to parents.

G. F. Thayer has addressed two schools in this city; schools also in Dorchester, Quincy, Petersham, Lunenburg, West Cambridge, Mass.; Keene, N.H.; and Burlington, Vt.

Rev. A. B. Muzzey — schools in Concord, West New-

ton, West Cambridge, Somerville, Mass.; Providence, R.I. (twice); and Bangor, Me.; and two additional county gatherings.

Rev. F. T. Gray — schools in Worcester, Newburyport, West Cambridge, Lunenburg, Athol, Warwick, Cohasset, and Scituate.

S. G. Simpkins — schools in West Cambridge, Marshfield, West Dedham, Mass.; and Standish and Saco, Me.

Rev. J. F. W. Ware — schools in Sterling, Concord, and Upton.

B. H. Greene — schools at East Boston, South Boston, and the Suffolk-street Chapel School in this city.

Rev. S. H. Winkley has attended a Sunday School convention at Walpole, and made numerous addresses to schools in this vicinity.

In a great majority of instances, during the year past, the agents have not only assisted in the Sunday Schools which they have visited, giving the general lesson, but have performed, in whole or in part, the pulpit services of the day; and, in some cases, held teachers' meetings in the evenings. And they are most happy to state, that their labors have been fully appreciated and gratefully acknowledged by the schools and assemblages visited.

The libraries connected with the schools have, in general, increased in magnitude, and improved in quality; evincing, on the part of those who manage them, a very important and needful attention to one of the great means of youthful training.

EXTRACTS

FROM

THE LETTERS OF FEMALE TEACHERS.

The Committee sent a special invitation to the Female Teachers, urging them to send us their views and wishes on the subject of early spiritual culture. We rejoice to say, that we have received many letters filled with true maternal wisdom and profound Christian feeling. From our heart of hearts we thank them. They speak to us as they who have walked in the Eden-garden of youthful innocence, and who know what childhood wants; and they all agree in asserting, that, in order to unfold the attributes of the soul, as the Creator designed, the *moral powers must take the lead.* Let this solemn verdict be written in letters of gold, and hung up in every family on earth. It may be translated into a prophecy of millennial glory.

1. Views of our female teachers on "the Value of the Sunday School."

Says a correspondent from Troy: "To me it has always seemed, that home and Sabbath Schools were intimately connected. The child who learns at his mother's knee to lisp 'Our Father who art in heaven,' hears the admonition of that parent confirmed by his Sabbath School teacher; that teacher to whom he looks as to some superior being, from whose decision there is no appeal. Age corrects this hyperbolical notion; but the impressions

graven on the young mind are never worn away. He ever retains the better portion of those early teachings, if they were as they should have been, in accordance with his higher, nobler nature.

"There are those with souls of the highest stamp, — that stamp with which the Almighty Creator seals his perfect work, — whose original brightness has been dimmed at its earliest awakening by sinful associations and early temptation. Perhaps no home is theirs, — no mother to lead the young thought up through the mists of earth to a brighter, better world; to tell them how the Crucified trod the same path their infant feet are on. Let one of these be taught at Sunday School the immortal laws of truth and right; let him be taught what prayer is; how to pray, and to whom to pray; — and, with but this shield against temptation, let him go forth to battle amid the restless scenes of that life with which it is his destiny to struggle. Hope and memory are the stars of the young voyager by which to guide his course, where Wrong is on the one hand and Wrong on the other, like Scylla and Charybdis; and Right, the narrow strait, between. Should the helmsman sleep at his post, the track is lost, and the soul-ship veers from the true course, and down, down it sinks into the whirlpool of evil. The light of hope goes out in that deep night; but, through a parted cloud, memory shines down upon the struggling mariner, and by its light the life-boat leaps to his rescue. One struggle with the storm-torn wave, and he is saved! That star of memory is the remembrance of childhood, with its sunny Sabbaths and gentle teachings; and that life-boat, the prayer that the soul of the sin-stained man sends up to the God of his boyhood."

Our correspondent from Littleton remarks on this subject: "The Sunday School is, in my view, an instrument

of immense power for good; and, as a public instrument, next to the holy ministrations of the pulpit; and might and ought so to be used as to impress those ministrations indelibly on the souls of teachers and pupils. This has ever been one great object with me as a teacher.

"It is in view of its capabilities, and not of results, that I speak of its great power of good. Alas! it is a power too little known, too little felt; a giant power in Liliputian hands. For what are its teachers generally, as we find them in our congregations, but babes in Christ? — who, too often, need themselves to be taught the principles and doctrines, and to feel the power, of Christianity in their own souls."

A correspondent from Wilton, N.H. says: "My first experience in a Sabbath School was in the summer of 1816. The winter previous, I had spent some weeks in Boston; and, very often observing children about the streets, I became impressed with the importance of some method to attract such into a course of improvement. I had read about Robert Raikes's school. Although it appeared evident that much more might be done in the city than in a country town, I resolved to attempt an experiment. I returned home to Wilton, N.H. and, with the assistance of one other young lady, opened a school during the intermission between the services. . . . The thing was then novel, and excited great attention. I must say, that, in a long experience, I have never seen a school so interested, or make so great improvement. Previous to this, as most of the people lived remote from the church, it was customary to spend the intermissions in and about the church. Too often, boys who belonged to respectable families, and others, if there were a different class, were engaged in pillaging orchards and gardens in the neighborhood. They were soon and wholly attracted to the

school: it was a novelty, and became popular. . . . An attention to religion seemed to grow out of this movement, and many were added to the church. . . . From this my first experience, and from that of subsequent years in various places where I have taught, I am decidedly convinced of the utility of Sunday Schools under suitable regulations."

Our correspondent at Fitzwilliam, N.H. writes thus on the utility of Sunday Schools: "The Sabbath Schools are said to be nurseries of piety. It is here many children receive *all* their religious impressions from week to week; and from this blessed institution we receive all our strength as organized bodies. We look to *this* for the future glory of our holy religion.

"It is a great work, that of training the young immortal mind, and of fitting it for usefulness in this life and for eternity. As the glory of our nation depends upon the common schools, so does the spiritual culture of the Sabbath School tell upon the church. We cannot tell the amount of evil eradicated, nor the effects of the good seed sown in the hearts of the young; but the future will disclose it, — eternity will reveal it."

A female teacher at Warwick says: "There is to *me* a sublimity and beauty in a well-regulated and properly conducted Sabbath School-room, which render it truly attractive and interesting. What is more delightful than to see children and youth happily arranged in groups around their several teachers; their minds placid and unprejudiced, eagerly looking to them for those instructions which relate to their highest welfare and peace! How inspiring to the devoted teacher! What a holy and benign influence is the Sabbath School *capable* of exerting, both upon the minds of the teachers and pupils!"

2. Their views "AS TO WHAT IS NECESSARY TO GIVE GREATER POWER AND USEFULNESS TO OUR SUNDAY SCHOOLS." These may be ranged under five distinct heads, namely, on teachers, teachers' meetings, modes of teaching, parents, pastors.

A. *Teachers.* — Our correspondent from Newport, R.I. says: "The observation and experience of several years' teaching lead me to think, that the success of Sunday Schools must depend on the teachers. If *they* are competant and faithful, and feel the importance of the work so fully, and have so strong a desire to make the scholars also understand and feel it, that it overcomes all obstacles to the faithful performance of their high duties, the Sunday School must be of very great importance. Teachers will be as much benefited as scholars, and all connected with them must feel the good influence.

"Teachers know the importance of their work generally, but do not always have, or give themselves up to, a strong desire to awaken in their scholars a love and appreciation of the true and holy; to turn them from the false, fleeting, and unsatisfactory life of the senses, to the spiritual, abiding, and satisfying life of the soul. So long as teachers are indifferent and pre-occupied, Sunday Schools can have but little influence for good."

Our correspondent from Concord, N.H. says: "But what do we *now* need? A more fervent piety among ourselves as teachers; — a more intimate and frequent communion with our heavenly Father, which shall so imbue our own souls with a love for him, and a sense of his continual presence, that we cannot rest without seeking to do somewhat to diffuse the same spirit. Remembering that 'we cannot impart that which *we* have not,' we should ever be seeking to elevate our own characters, by all means of moral and mental culture;

that example may have power to deepen the impression of truth the lips may utter, rather than efface it.

"We should work from the love of our work; striving 'by all means to save some.' By studying their tastes and characters, and endeavoring to adapt ourselves to them as far as this may be right; by manifesting an interest in them, out of the school as well as in it; by special preparation to meet them on each successive Sabbath-day; by making *all* our *pleasures*, and, as far as practicable, our other duties, subservient to our interest in the school; and by laboring perseveringly and unweariedly, should we seek to win them to the fold of the good Shepherd."

From our correspondent at Fitchburg we have these words of experience and truth: "I have been a teacher in the Sunday School in this place for the last twenty years, with the exception of two or three summers. My views and feelings have ever been, that, if competent persons are provided to teach, the Sunday School is destined to be of great importance in the moral and religious education of the young.

"As may be inferred, my 'hopes and fears' rest mainly on the characters of the teachers. I do not mean on their morality and piety alone; for many a truly pious person has done little good to a child, though engaged a lifetime in instructing him, if it has been done mechanically. If soul-stirring truths are conveyed to the mind of a child in a cold and lifeless manner, will it reach the heart of that child? I say, No. He will not give attention enough even to burden his memory for a moment with it.

"In our preparation for Sabbath School instruction, we must study *how* we shall teach to make a right impression on the mind, as well as *what* we shall teach."

A teacher in the Sunday School of the Church of the Messiah, N.Y. says: "We have the smile and the benediction of our pastor more frequently than ever before; we have the constant, untiring activity, earnestness, and benevolence of our faithful superintendent; but we are not *zealous* among ourselves. There is not enough of kind sympathy, good feeling, and union of thought and purpose and lofty aim, between our teachers. 'Zeal and unity are the two great arteries through which the life-blood of the school must flow.' We are deficient in these: therefore the true existence of our school languishes."

Our correspondent from Warwick on this point asks: "That the Sunday School may exert a holy and benign influence, what are some of the important requisites? Firstly, I think, *suitable* and *faithful* teachers are highly important; and I fear a lack of these is one of the most serious detriments to its progress there are. How important that the young mind should be guided aright, that its first religious impressions should be those of purity and practical worth!

"And I would ask, *can* that teacher lead his pupil to the 'fountain of living waters,' if he himself has not tasted its refreshing draught? Can he impressively inculcate obedience to the precepts of the Saviour, if he does not *regard* them himself? Will he be likely to teach the duty of prayer, if he has never experienced its efficacy? Or, if he *does* urge these duties, will his advice be very likely to be heeded, or have any very salutary effect upon the scholar?

"I would ask again, should any one excuse himself from his labors, as a teacher, by a plea of *deficiency* in these necessary qualifications? *I* would rather say, let him apologize before his heavenly Father for having so

long neglected so plain a duty to himself and his Maker, and, instead of *shrinking* from his task, arouse every energy of his soul, and with persevering effort resolve, under the blessing of God, he will no longer loiter away the choice moments of his existence in ignorance of those precious laws which would fit him for a faithful performance of the duties which devolve upon him in this responsible department."

We wish to add here also the following opinion expressed by the same lady: "I think it very desirable that Christianity should be presented to children in a *cheerful*, *pleasant*, and intelligible light, that they may be rather *attracted* to the school than *urged* to it; which I think will naturally follow, if their instructions are of the character they *should* be; and may each one of us be imbued with a sense of the importance of lending every effort that will tend to *produce* this happy effect!"

Our correspondent of Fitzwilliam, N.H. on the point under consideration, says: "The doctrines which our religion embraces are not so mystical as to prejudice the young mind, or weaken its faith; so simple are the explanations, so concise the argument, that 'he who runs may read.' We know that children are easily governed by love; then, how soon will they learn to reverence their Maker, when taught that his great goodness towards sinful man, his exceeding love, was manifested in sending his own Son into the world to save sinners; and that Jesus took little children in his arms, and blessed them, and said, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven'!

"I have been a teacher many years, yet feel incompetent for the task: I feel the need of greater preparation. . . . I sometimes feel, that, if there is any benefit derived in attending the Sabbath School, it is and must be attributed to the faithfulness of the teachers; and that

not only the lesson should be well prepared, but the condition of each pupil, and their several wants, carefully considered. . . . If the teachers would do their duty, if they would make the exercises profitable, the pupils would soon be earnest in turn, and it would continue."

Our correspondent from Littleton, under this head, says: "This, in my view, is the first, second, and third requisite for a successful Sunday School, — suitable, interested teachers; and these we must bring up in our schools; keep our pupils till they are fitted for teachers, nor think them fit till they are *personally* interested in their own souls' salvation. Our teachers are generally too young. Every parent who can possibly be so, *should* be a member of the school."

Our correspondent at Buffalo, N.Y. writes: "The young mind needs tender care, and religious instruction should fall like dew from heaven. Good lessons should not be taught harshly, else we shall fail in our attempt to interest the listener. Indeed cross looks, words, or actions are altogether out of place in so holy a sanctuary as our Sunday School should be. I fear some teachers are too severe, and many scholars too inattentive in the performance of this great duty, to make the work go on smoothly. But I sincerely trust, if there are any such, the difficulty under which they labor will soon be removed. It may seem hard to govern all ruling passions; but if we add perseverance to patience, let love dwell in our hearts, and take hope for our guiding star, I feel assured none will fail in the accomplishment of the great work they have begun.

"Teachers should feel themselves pupils. Their lesson should be carefully looked over, that they may assist the learner; and they should feel an interest in the subject they review, else how can they point out any good and

beautiful truth, if their mind is not on their duty, till the hour for performing it arrives?

"It is a good plan to narrate some pleasing story with the truth we wish to give, contained therein. Children will catch at goodness, if framed in a net-work of fancy, much quicker than if we give them morals in a rule of rigid formality.

"Simplicity should veil our work. It is well to feel the importance of what we undertake, that we may use high thoughts and sound principles in the performance of our duty. But, then, this should dwell in the heart alone. Our outward actions should picture forth the goodness of the soul, but exhibit no feeling of boastful pride at the good we may be doing, or may have done. We must remember there are many things for us to learn, and we often find ourselves reading good lessons in the simple ways of a little child."

B. *Teachers' Meetings.* — Our correspondent, of Fitzwilliam, under this head, says: "I have been a teacher many years, yet feel incompetent for the task. I feel the need of greater preparation. This can be remedied in a measure by attending teachers' meetings. . . . There is need of self-culture; and, if teachers should meet often, and speak of their hopes and fears, and for the purpose of prayer, we might hope for better results. If we have faith in the efficacy of prayer, we shall often be refreshed as we address the throne of grace."

Our correspondent from Warwick makes a single remark on this important topic which should not be omitted: "A more frequent interchange of *thought* upon the best method of teaching, with our experience in the same, would, I think, add much to the interest of many teachers, as well as strengthen and encourage *all*, which seems to me to be a very important point. Above all, let us

crave the divine blessing on our efforts, otherwise they must be fruitless."

From a second correspondent in Concord, N.H. we have these words on this subject: "But well do I know, that, when we have sought most faithfully to do all this, and more, we shall often, very often, find ourselves unsuccessful. When we have prepared ourselves most carefully for the hour we are to spend in the school, we may find the warmth of our feelings chilled and our tongues almost palsied by the inattention and seeming indifference of those whom we would so gladly interest. Then we go home with a sickening sense of disappointment, and the conviction that we are unfit for the work, — must leave it to others. At such times we do need a cheering word: we need teachers' meetings. Not cold, silent ones, where we are so distrustful of each other that we make a point of concealing our real emotions, and, if we venture to speak at all, say that in which we are not interested ourselves, and of course cannot expect others to be; but meetings, in which each one shall feel under obligation to contribute something, if it be ever so little, merely asking a question (anybody can do that) to the common treasury of thought; in which we meet as friends, for mutual counsel and encouragement, not mutual criticism; attempting to give utterance, though in trembling accents, to the soul's deepest wants, or its most cherished truth. Thus would our pastor perceive where most judiciously to apply his efforts."

The letter before quoted, from our correspondent at New York, has on this point the following remark: "We are Unitarians; but we have not *unity*, entire unity, in our cause. In nothing is this want so painfully apparent as in the aspect of the teachers' meetings, if they can be truly called such, when we consider how rare they are,

and how small, how inexcusably small, the number who attend. They are beneficial in the extreme, and for this very reason we need them oftener. They are delightful aids in the path of teaching, and in the path of daily life. I never left our little social meetings without feeling refreshed and invigorated by the truths I had heard, and the reflections called into being by those truths."

c. *Modes of Teaching.* — A correspondent at Newport, R.I. says: "I would ask the best way of securing the attention of the child during the exercises of the school? And is it best in teaching, that question-books should be used, and passages from scripture recited, and questions put from the pupil to the teacher? I have not decided in my own mind which is the most effectual; but, as the opportunity is offered for any questions to be put in regard to teaching, these seem to me the most important."

A correspondent at Troy, N.Y. seems to have anticipated such questions, and to have answered them thus: "In Sunday teaching, it is not enough to set the pupil a dry routine of catechism and answer, or long and wearisome chapters for perfect committal; thus rendering the lesson an effort of memory, in which the understanding has little part. There should be some matter of interest in each lesson, by which the attention of the learner can be awakened, — leading him to think for himself; and, when this is done, the teacher may often receive that from the scholar of which he has never thought.

"The smallest head has an internal mechanism that is ever busy thinking; and, if the subject is one within its range, somewhere in the little brain is a thought upon it, and this it should be the teacher's aim to draw forth from its lurking-place by kindness and encouragement. To interest, the teacher must be interested. He should bring the subject to the comprehension of his pupils, nor deal

in dry abstractions. Enough of the real life should be put with the heavenly, to make the young immortal feel that it is a more serious thing to *live well* than to die. Let the teacher love his class, and with the natural influence which one kindly heart exerts over another, they will repay with interest what feeling is shown to them."

Another correspondent from Newport, R.I. says on this subject: "In regard to question-books, we think an improvement might be made by taking up the histories of *particular characters* in the *Bible* in all their *bearings*, not alluding to certain events in their lives having no reference to others. To have the mind's storehouse furnished with *connected details of events and characters*, rather than discursive ones, would, we think, have a tendency to keep alive the interest; and the remembrance of them would not so soon be effaced, if conducted in a proper way; for we all know that a story interests children most."

She adds another important remark: "There are two things I have found essential in keeping the class together, and preserving a mutual and united interest. Punctuality in attendance, and occasionally visiting the pupils, particularly when detained from school by sickness and other causes. They seem to think that you must be interested in them if you call upon them, and do not let trifles keep you from the school-room. When this has been neglected, the effects are obvious; irregularity in attendance, and its necessary consequence, — decrease of interest."

A correspondent from Worcester writes to us in this wise: "I am fully persuaded, that *more* good can be done with small classes than with large ones. Intimate communion is quite necessary for improvement. When a class is large, the attention of the teacher is too much divided.

Direct appeals must be made to the feelings of each scholar, in order to interest or influence them.

"My ardent desire is to have each scholar understand, as far as possible, not only the literal, but the spiritual meaning of each lesson, and then make an application of them *to ourselves* as the sense of each requires. Sometimes we adopt resolutions for the government of our conduct through the week; such as 'Think no evil,' 'Speak no evil,' 'Try to do to others as we would have others do to us,' &c."

Says our correspondent from Chicopee: "Our lessons are in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, which we are going through, in course. We make use of Allen's Questions on the Acts. For explanations, I refer to Livermore's Commentary on the Acts, to the Union Bible Dictionary, to the Life and Travels of the Apostle Paul, and such other aids as we may have access to. The class are attentive, and their general deportment shows them to be interested in the study of the Scriptures; and I think the Sabbath School is to them a place to which they love to resort for instruction."

Our correspondent at Littleton makes the following suggestion: "Might not something be done by a better organization in most of our schools? Might there not be a series of books, first, second, third, and perhaps fourth, which should reach from the adult down to the infant, all upon the same subjects, or same chapters in the Bible, so that every scholar in the school, and in the Bible classes, should have the same lesson under consideration at the same time? Might not the teachers' meetings then be brought to bear more powerfully on the school, if the lessons were first considered there under the guidance of the pastor? And would he not have a more satisfactory means of knowing what was understood and taught by the teachers? This is a mere suggestion."

The following entirely new mode of conducting and instructing a Sunday School is suggested by our correspondent at Wilton, N.H. who commenced the work of Sunday School teaching in 1816: "I am convinced," she remarks, "that very many of our schools are carried on in a formal way, failing to interest the children so much as they ought. The idea of a whole school of fifty or a hundred scholars, meeting together as one body, under one teacher, to recite a general lesson, appears to me far more attractive than the present method of classing a school, and placing each class under separate teachers. This one teacher might give some general oral instruction to the whole school, and might have as many assistants as he or she found requisite. It might be replied that this is the office of the superintendent. If this is the case, I would only refer for information to Sabbath School teachers in general, to say how well the office of the superintendent is sustained.

"This dividing-up of a school, and appointing distinct teachers over separate classes, seems like dislocating a body, whose foundation should be one. The bonds of union are at least weakened, and the school dwindles into a formal, monotonous routine, destitute of that life-giving spirit which should pervade every scene of moral and religious instruction."

D. *Parents.* — A correspondent from Northborough, in this State, who signs herself "An old teacher in her fiftieth year," offers us the following thoughts on the subject of parental influence in connection with the Sunday School: "I regard the Sunday School as an institution of divine order, and the service it demands is peculiarly a labor of love, admirably adapted to expand and call forth the best feelings of the heart; and it is to me a source of sincere regret, that so few parents, espe-

cially those who profess to be Christians, are engaged heart and hand in this delightful service. I well know the reason which is usually given as an *excuse*, viz. '*I do not feel qualified to teach.*' Is not this a very palpable reason why they ought to learn? The Sabbath School is not confined to children. It comprises, or rather it should comprise, the whole congregation, either as teachers or learners. Can there be any impropriety in adult persons being pupils, merely because they are men and women, and perhaps heads of families? I admit, these circumstances often render a regular attendance inconvenient. But if those who can, and do, remain during the service would enter the school and engage in the general service, thus giving it countenance and encouragement, and withdraw by themselves for mutual edification, by seeking a better acquaintance with the Scriptures, which contain the words of eternal life, they would thereby promote their own spiritual progress, and their example would have a powerful influence over the children.

"I do not intend, by these remarks, to speak lightly of young teachers. By no means: many thanks are due to them for their self-sacrificing and devoted labors. But no reflecting mind can doubt, that *maternal experience*, the anxieties and hopes which alternately thrill the mother's bosom with emotions of joy or sorrow, eminently qualify her for the discharge of this sacred and responsible duty; and it is a solemn consideration, which must not be overlooked, that whatever power or ability we possess to do any thing for the advancement of *moral goodness* in the elevation of mankind from the power of moral evil, is a *call* on us for the faithful discharge of that duty. It is a talent, a *trust*, or it may be a sphere of influence, given to our care, for the future improvement of which we must one day render an account." (Her pastor says,

in forwarding this communication, that "it is from one of our respectable matrons, for several years a successful teacher of a large Bible-class of young ladies in our parish.")

In the interesting communication which we have from a lady in Buffalo, we have this thought on the subject of parental duty in connection with the Sunday School: — "The subject is one that does not have half enough thought bestowed upon it. Many parents consider it too sober a matter for them to meddle with. They think, no doubt, the Sunday School is well enough, — indeed they would not have it done away with, as it interests their children, and does them some good; but then, the idea that *their* influence might exert a power over all, would they but weigh the subject in their minds, has never once occurred to them. Now, this is a fearful thing. Children need help and example at home, else they will grow weary. Their young minds will sink under the burden; and they will soon tire, unless some one shall teach them, and explain the beautiful mystery of the Scriptures, more than once in a week. And I would not have this done by precept and rules, but by bright and happy illustration, that will win their thoughts, and impart truths to them gently."

From one of our correspondents in the school at Concord, N.H. we have this remark on parental influence: "We need the constant co-operation of parents, both in and out of the school. Their presence there would have a highly beneficial influence, I am inclined to think. To say the least, their presence gives an increased interest to the school, in my opinion; to say nothing of the pleasant emotion that any one must feel to see the parents set the example for their children, by accompanying them to the Sunday School, — thus encouraging the teachers, and

whomsoever others there be who feel an interest in the moral and spiritual welfare of their offspring."

The following letter on the same subject is from an experienced female teacher in the school at East Bridgewater: "I have been a teacher, most of the time, for twenty years. I have had classes of both boys and girls. Some of the time, have taught those who were quite young; at other times, those from sixteen to eighteen. The pleasure and satisfaction which I have derived from teaching some of the scholars are indescribable; while from others I have had no encouragement for a long time: perhaps they would be irregular in their attendance; and, when they did attend, they would come with an excuse, — they did not know where the lesson was; or, if they knew where it was, it was not half recited. From what families do such scholars come? Do they come from those parents who are endeavoring to follow the example of our blessed Saviour, or from those who are indifferent to his instructions? I have found it to be from the latter. I think we never need inquire the character of parents, or the influences by which the children are surrounded; for we can very easily tell after meeting them a few Sabbaths.

"Can there not be something done to create more of an interest in the parents, through the children, than has yet been done? If FATHERS would come forward and take an active part in the Sabbath Schools (more than they do), our young men and boys would esteem it a much greater privilege to attend it than they now do; — and why should they not? Is not the present and future welfare of their children dearer to them than any thing else?"

Our correspondent from a society in New York brings this subject somewhat under a new form before the mind.

She says: "One idea is ever uppermost in my mind, respecting my scholars. If they are poor, my influence must be great, and my efforts not useless; whereas, if they are the children of the rich, I feel comparatively powerless, and all my efforts appear to me almost thrown away. So much do outward circumstances unfortunately affect our relative positions in life. In the one case, we may expect some sympathy, or at least some kind of acknowledgment, from the parent; in the other, the parent and teacher (from many causes) are too frequently unknown to each other; and the consequence is, that the child never quite understands why the Sunday School is important, and why it is right to respect and love a place where he is taught to reverence his Maker, and feel that he has an immortal soul. The time may come when all will *co-operate* in the great work, — parents, teachers, and children. Then will the millennial period of the Sunday School have indeed arrived."

From our correspondent at Fitchburg, we have this opinion expressed: "My views and feelings have ever been, that, if competent persons are provided to teach, the Sunday School is destined to be of great importance in the moral and religious education of the young. And, if parents would give to it their hearty support, it would strengthen their influence over the minds of their children; and they would thus assist each other in carrying forward the great work of training the immortal mind to usefulness here, and to happiness hereafter."

The following on the same subject is from the lady of one of our respected clergymen: "I have no hesitation in saying, that I think this school has accomplished a vast amount of good; but, ah! how much more good this and other Sunday Schools might accomplish, if they had the full and hearty co-operation of all the parents!

"Before closing these few remarks, I must speak of the delight I have felt in reading the excellent Reports you have sent out since you have been Secretary of the Boston Sunday School Society. Such appeals as you have there made to parents cannot be disregarded: they *must* be felt. And I, for one, have felt them. Happy will it be for me if these appeals have led me to a stricter observance of the religious duties I owe to my children. Many parents have a very faint idea of the obligations they are under to their children, in a religious point of view. Could those of us who are parents feel our obligations in such a light as Dr. Bushnell points out, what a vast change should we witness in society! May God hasten such a glorious era!"

E. *Clergymen.* — On this point we have first a letter from Fall River: "Your eleventh question to be answered is, 'What will give more power and usefulness to our Sunday Schools?' My answer is, Conduct, on the part of our clergymen, both in and out of the pulpit, upon all occasions and everywhere, which is consistent with a full conviction, an unwavering faith, — 1st, That, in the words and life of Jesus, as they may become more and more perfectly revealed and unfolded to the heart and mind of every individual, by his own efforts and the aid and assistance of others who are privileged to afford them, there is a vital energy, an essential, spiritual, and saving power; and, 2d, That what is now, most emphatically, the duty and privilege of the clergy, is to gain for themselves, and to enable their people to attain unto, a more perfect knowledge of Christ, of his inward thoughts and being, as they *may* be learned from his outward manifestations. For is it not so, that, in our most intellectual congregations, there are many to whom the terms, 'faith in Christ,' 'faith in his *name*,' have but a most meagre

significance; and to whom the exhortation sometimes given, 'to live in the spirit of his life,' conveys no very exalted conception either of duty or privilege? . . . Why will not our clergymen lead us to Christ, and enable us to learn of him?"

Says another, who writes from Concord, N.H.: "I cannot assent to the assertion of a speaker at one of the anniversaries of the Society, that 'the teachers are the school.' Though not disposed to detract in the least from the responsibility he would thus throw upon them, our experience of the past few years of frequent change — at times furnishing the aid we needed, then leaving us keenly alive to the want of it — has convinced me, that they with the scholars constitute only one half of it. The prompt and efficient superintendent, the watchful and affectionate pastor, constitute the other half. To the earthly shepherd must we often go for a supply of spiritual sustenance for both sheep and lambs."

From our correspondent at Buffalo, we make one further extract, with which we close this part of our subject: "There is one thing," she remarks, "which I think would add much to make our Sunday Schools more interesting; that is, if each pastor would but lend his presence and holy influence through the reign of school-hours. Children would then rid themselves of that look of awe which often will flit over their faces, when a minister enters; and, methinks, teachers would feel more energy, if they knew their labors were looked upon approvingly by the head of the church. Then, too, if one who has had so much more experience than we would but look into our work each week, perchance some new ideas might be suggested, and improvements made, that would greatly aid us."

3. The answers of our female teachers to this question, "WHAT INFLUENCE DO YOU THINK THE SUNDAY SCHOOL HAS HAD UPON THE COMMUNITY?"

The first answer we present is from our correspondent at Concord, N.H.: "The question with regard to the influence of the Sunday Schools upon the community, and what is wanted to make them more effectual, when applied to our little school, at first throws a chill upon the spirits, and we are almost tempted to say, its influence is nought, and every thing is needed. But a little reflection brings the conviction that it is not so. For as in the material, so in the moral world, the most powerful influences often operate most quietly, and excite least observation. And Christian faith, as well as the experience of some of us who have been pupils, will not permit us to believe that the earnest, devoted labors of our teachers have been wholly ineffectual."

From a lady at East Marshfield, we have these cheering words: "Several years ago, when it was a 'day of small things' with us, I was a teacher in this school, an account of which I now send you. Although not a Sunday School teacher now, I feel a very deep interest in this institution, and have watched the progress of the Sunday School in this society with a vigilant eye. I think we have done well here. You well recollect what we were as a society fourteen years ago. You came here, and preached soon after the division in our society. Then, in the most pleasant weather, our congregation did not number more than sixty persons; now our Sunday School numbers seventy-one scholars. Surely we have reason to rejoice that the exertions of our excellent superintendent have thus far been crowned with success. And it is a pleasing feature in our school, that the pupils, particularly females, remain in it at a considerable age. They do not

begin to think, by the time they are fifteen years of age, that they are too old to go to the Sunday School. Clergymen have spoken of this several times who have been here on exchanges. I have no hesitation in saying, that this school has accomplished a vast amount of good."

From another correspondent at East Bridgewater, we have the following statement: "Our Sunday School was organized twenty-one years ago. Soon after, the ladies formed a Sewing Circle, and took the *school* under its special care and patronage. By them it was sustained principally, while they were destitute of a settled minister; a period of eight years. They annually appropriated money for the library, and towards defraying the expense of some celebration in which parents and children unite. These have created a general interest, and given a tone to public sentiment.

"The school is well attended through the year, and comprises all the children and most of the younger members of the parish, and some more advanced. About one-third of our teachers are parents, and all are punctual and constant, exemplifying in their own lives the power of the truths they teach."

The following, on the same subject, is from a teacher in the school at Concord, N.H. who, says her superintendent, from "having been a pupil for many years in our Sunday School, has become one of our most faithful and devoted teachers."

"The hours I have spent in the Sabbath School, I look back upon as among the happiest. The teacher has much to discourage and much to gratify. But, in view of the discouragements, the thought that the Sunday School teacher has such a *good* field in which to labor is enough to throw sunshine on the darkest side of the picture.

"I can't but think the influences from Sabbath School

instruction have been salutary in the community where such privileges are enjoyed. The benefit of such instruction does as much good as one could reasonably expect, I think, when we consider how short a time is spent in the Sabbath School, compared with the adverse influences that are continually thrown around us in our intercourse with the world from Sabbath to Sabbath; but where there is devotedness on the part of teachers towards scholars, resulting from a faith in our heavenly Father through our Saviour Jesus Christ, may we not trust that 'God will give the increase'?"

The following is from a female teacher in the school at Taunton: "At our last teachers' meeting, Mr. Brigham, the pastor, read us a letter asking sundry questions, among which was this one, 'What influence does the Sunday School exert upon the community at large?' In reply, we would make simply a statement of facts, hoping to encourage others who may be engaged in like enterprises. For the last two years we have clothed fourteen children for Sunday and week-day school; the whole number of which have attended the *Sunday* School very regularly. A number of others have been helped in order that they might attend, but have left us.

"Last July, it was proposed by one of the teachers to begin a Sewing School, to meet every Saturday afternoon, for the purpose of teaching the poor children of the town to sew. We began with a small number, but through the winter have had fifty scholars, and most of the time fourteen teachers. We have also, among the ladies, raised a sum nearly sufficient for educating a young minister, and anticipate no difficulty in making out the required sum. Did it devolve upon us to speak of the influence of the Sunday School upon the teachers themselves, we could say much; but that is apart from our duty at this time."

Our female correspondents have not dwelt much at length on this subject, nor many of them touched upon it. The following thought from the communication received from Buffalo will bring it seemingly to a fitting close: "I hope all things pertaining to this great and glorious work will soon be thought of more seriously. Many improvements have been made; but there is much left yet to be done; and much that can be done, if we but go to work rightly. I feel that the subject will ere long reach a high destination, and have a thought given to it by many who cannot now let it have a resting-place in their minds. I trust all engaged in the work will not despair. Let not the heart sink, though dark clouds do obstruct the light that guides us. If we but trust in God for help, all will be well with us, and the time will come when all shall 'reap what they have sown.'"

4. Miscellaneous Thoughts and Suggestions.

One of our correspondents says: "This, together with some other things, I contend for as being essential to make the Sabbath School the powerful instrument for doing good that was contemplated in its design. And among these I would mention the punctuality and example of the teachers, as something of great importance. The former deficiency has been the cause of whole classes leaving the school. And then, again, I suppose the teacher is little aware oftimes that their conduct is scrutinized by their classes, when in and out of the school."

Another says: "One of the greatest modern improvements made by our worthy superintendent is to be found in the increase of Bible-teaching and of Bibles. We were about forgetting its importance until thus aroused. New Testament instruction should be the foundation of all our teaching: we feel very insecure without it.

"My greatest difficulty, for some time past, has been to awaken a stronger interest in its truths. I find it exceedingly difficult, and at times impossible, with some of the young minds around me. This is too often the case, I believe. The reason must be, that the taste is not encouraged at home. We know that we cannot love intensely, nor take an interest in, any subject *often absent* from our thoughts. That which we think of most is always the most dear to us."

Another says: "The Sunday School is a part of my existence. I can never think of it but with reverence and love. Its sacredness is so engraven on my heart, that, when I hear it lightly spoken of, I feel as if some sacrilege had been committed. Now that I have become a teacher, I know its importance. What does this name imply? It calls upon me to act in daily life in such a way as to deserve the sacred trust, and to fulfil its duties so faithfully as to really deserve the name and office of Sunday School teacher."

Again it is said: "There is an unbounded influence in example. Let me think of this, and strive more ardently to become myself what I would have my pupils become: then our Master may see his image perhaps reflected in us all."

Another expresses this opinion: "A lack of interest and attention appears to be the prevailing fault, with but little respect or reverence for their superintendent and teachers. Doubtless the error is attributable to ourselves, many, if not at all, times. We go into the school with our minds and hearts not fully prepared to meet the *wants* of the pupils."

Here is another thought deserving of consideration: "We think much pains should be taken in the selection of appropriate books for the library of the Sabbath School. Good books will bear a second reading: those unsuitable

better not be read at all. Many times there are books the pupils cannot comprehend; they throw them aside at once, and the teacher can see that it is not likely they can be interested in them, or wish to peruse them, from the fact they cannot understand them."

Another says: "The old fashion of teaching children much that was irksome because not comprehended, and binding them down to rigid observances which they could not understand, seems to have given way to the idea, that every thing proper to be learned by children must be set before them as a pleasure attainable without labor. And they look to this attainment as an end. I would have children taught that much labor, hard labor, is requisite, not only to arrive at a high degree of intelligence, but also to reach any high moral attainment. I would not have them told, 'Oh! your lessons are very easy; it will not take much study to get them:' but I would tell them, 'If you study as you ought, you will study hard; you will try to understand every word and sentence; and, by this hard study, your mind will be strengthened; and, if you rightly use that strength, as you grow wiser, you will grow better, and therefore happier.'"

Again, it is said: "I have great hopes for the advancement of Christianity and sound morals in the world. These hopes are mostly stayed on the culture of the young. To train them in the way they should go is worthy of the most profound study of every Christian."

Another says: "That a Sabbath School teacher has many trials, none but those who have been so employed alone knows; but that there is a deep and lasting satisfaction in the endeavor to convey the truth to the mind of a child, none know but they who feel that that endeavor has been blessed, by succeeding in awakening in the child an interest in the great truths we teach."

5. Thoughts concerning Sunday Schools. — From a Boston correspondent, who enters into an earnest defence of the institution against some recent attacks:

"It has been said, that 'Sunday Schools which have had a modern origin very poorly take the place of the old catechetical system, which had for its object the specific communication of Scriptural facts and Bible truths, simply as objects of knowledge to all the people.' And the writer goes on to state, 'that Sunday Schools do not possess the confidence of the most thoughtful persons, often want intelligent and devout teachers, and, in fact, seem to be temporarily occupying the ground which must presently be filled with something more to the purpose.'

"Now, in regard to the first proposition, we contend that the Sunday School, in all its bearings, has a far more extended influence, and much more than fills the place of the old catechizing system. Indeed, that is but a branch of the work of Sunday Schools, — an important one, perhaps the most so; and the one most neglected, least understood. We are glad to have the eyes of teachers attracted to this point. We believe the error is, that we have too much divorced our teaching from the Bible. We have too much given it on the authority of our own opinion of right and wrong; have aimed to awaken the religious sentiment through all other sources of influence, by a survey of the works of nature, of God's providences in the world, and by the study of ourselves, rather than through the *word* of God. We have not known or felt the power there is in Christianity and its institutions to unfold and hold the religious sentiment, nor realized that we could do no better work in our vocation than to help the young minds around us to a clearer understanding of its records as given in the New Testament, — help them also to a clearer view of the connection and relative

value of the old Hebrew Scriptures. Hence, we send out from the Sunday School those rightly disposed, but whose religion and religious duties lie subject to their own varying opinions and wills, subject to the mighty stress of the world's temptations, exposed to the perilous currents of this ever-flowing river of life. They would fain possess, and perhaps desire to spread, religion; but about Christianity, as the form and body of Christ's religion and their own, they know little, and have less thoughtful care to sustain it. Of course, their religion itself is held by a very precarious tenure. Might it not have been made more sure by their clear recognition of, their reverent regard for, Christianity and its ordinances, as of binding responsibility upon themselves? We believe this state of things, as we premised, has arisen in a great measure from the gradual disuse or misuse of the Bible. An eminent divine of our city, one who is no alarmist, but whose steady, unprejudiced mind sees and presents cause and consequence in their just issue, says, in a printed discourse on 'Religious Instruction,' that 'the old custom of reading the Bible has very much decayed.' It is fatal to lose it from the Sunday School. . . . . .

"Perhaps an excuse for teachers is, that they can hardly be expected to be in advance of the church. Those Christian institutions, the plan of which lies as it were draughted in the New Testament, are but slightly regarded. How few remember constantly, and so make their children feel, that by baptism they are really introduced, and are abiding in the 'visible church of Christ on earth'! If this idea were a prevailing one, how few young persons, if really seeking to be members of the 'true, invisible church,' would be unwilling to ratify and seal the privilege of being members of the outward church! And those not seeking a heavenly kingdom would have a

keener remorse in knowing they had stepped from the path of safety on which they were placed, to traverse a way of sin and death. This would seem to be the true 'church doctrine,' without the arrogant assumptions of episcopacy. We would ask now, how many, in the last year, have we sent from our Sunday Schools into the church? How many have we influenced to seal in solemn covenant their sense of obligation to their Saviour? We do not make the answer a test of the teachers' faithfulness, nor of the success of the Sunday School. But the answer may point to a weak spot, may be a hint, if not any proof of error. Almost there seems a harshness, a grossness, in adverting so plainly (as there certainly would be in any undue urgency on this point) to the sacred service of the Communion as an act of self-consecration to the church of Christ. For this, beyond all outward influence, must be very much between the individual soul, and the holy Beings with whom in this matter it must deal. But the subject has pressed with peculiar force on our mind, producing feelings of disappointment and unfeigned sorrow. If in these feelings other teachers and the body of Christians outside the Sunday School have no share, they may perhaps be dismissed as having no legitimate cause.

"In reference to the second proposition, that Sunday Schools do not possess the confidence of the most thoughtful persons, we think statistics and records would prove that they *do*, though the 'most thoughtful' be, indeed, least in number. It would be curious, and very sad, to analyze the motives that sway the large body which may be denominated as *not* thoughtful. Nor would it be very gratifying to know the estimation in which the Sunday School is held by many who certainly are *full of thought*, enlightened, educated, cultivated men and women, who stand aloof from it. Many causes for this lie inside the

school; and this is now our point, which we find running into the third count in the charge brought against it,— 'that it often wants intelligent and devout teachers.' God knows this is, indeed, true; and we, the teachers, must know it also and feel it, if we would prevent and disprove the sum of the statements against our cherished Sunday School, that 'it seems to be *temporarily* occupying the ground which must presently be filled with something more to the purpose.' Nothing ever *can* be 'more to the purpose' than this institution of the Sunday School, if allowed its full scope. They who are outside can hardly judge of its unseen, subtle working, far down in the hearts of teachers and scholars. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth.' But 'it wants intelligent and devout teachers;' and such the teachers must make themselves. Are those without *more* intelligent, *more* devout? For charity's sweet sake, for the love of men and the fear of God, let them come forward, and lay their gift on the altar. There are a few of the noblest minds in the community who give their best powers, who think them well bestowed, in the Sunday School; if not permanent teachers, yet, in the press of literary and scientific pursuits, find time to hold offices in the institution, give frequent calls, and carefully prepare lessons to deliver to the school at large; who are interested in having their children pass in as scholars, and on as teachers. These, indeed, are few. By the characters of those who are its members, by the degree of mental and spiritual attainment in the body of teachers, will the Sunday School be made more or less honorable in the eyes of men, more or less acceptable to God."

ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING.

THE twenty-second anniversary of the Sunday School Society was observed on Wednesday evening, May 29, at the Church in Federal-street. The house was crowded: Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, President, in the chair; assisted by one Vice-President, the Hon. Samuel Hoar, — the able and steady friend of Sunday Schools. A short and appropriate prayer was offered by Rev. Dr. Allen, of Northborough. A few extracts were then read by the Rev. Charles Brooks, of Boston, Corresponding Secretary of the Society, from the Annual Report. This Report is the last which will be made by this gentleman, he having declined a re-election. The Report was accepted by a unanimous vote.

The following questions, printed with the order of exercises, were presented for general discussion: —

1. Must the primary truths of Christianity be implanted in the young mind, by instruction, before we can best reach the affections, or properly move the soul to the highest action?

2. Should doctrines be taught systematically? For example: Should the idea of Christ as a *Redeemer* be presented to a child before the idea of Christ as a *Teacher*? — 1 Tim. i. 15. John xviii. 37.

3. How far are Pastors, Parents, and Churches responsible before God for the condition of their Sunday Schools?

4. How far should oral and textual instruction be united? What principles should govern us in the selection of Text-books and Sunday-school Libraries?

5. What will give greater power and usefulness to our Sunday Schools?

6. Are there not peculiarities in the present religious condition of the world, which call for extraordinary efforts on the part of Sunday-school Teachers?

The audience were addressed by Manlius S. Clarke, Esq. of Boston; Rev. John H. Heywood, of Louisville, Ky.; Rev. W. Mountford, of England; Rev. John H. Morison, of Milton; and by the President. The remark will approve itself to all who were present, when we say, that speeches more full of wisdom and eloquence are seldom heard. The benediction was pronounced by the venerable Dr. Kendall, of Plymouth.

The exercises were enlivened by the sweet music of pupils from our Sunday Schools, under the guidance of Mr. Johnson.

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THE

TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

5741.30

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE

PROCEEDINGS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-EIGHTH OF MAY, 1851.

BOSTON:

SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS,

124, WASHINGTON STREET.

1851.

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S. K. Green, M.D.
June 27, 1864.

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* Deceased.

Books for Sunday School Teachers.

Livermore's Commentaries on the Gospels and the Acts. 3 vols.
Ware's Life of the Saviour.
Ware on the Formation of the Christian Character.
Greenwood's Lives of the Apostles.
Milman's History of the Jews.
Bulfinch's Holy Land and its Inhabitants.
Robinson's Dictionary of the Bible. (Calmet's.)
Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge.
Moral and Spiritual Culture. By Rev. R. C. Waterston.
Hints to Sunday School Teachers. By Rev. T. B. Fox.
History of Sunday Schools, and of the Religious Education of the Young, from the Earliest Times. By Lewis G. Pray.
Sunday School Teacher's Guide. By Rev. A. B. Muzzey.
Lectures on Christian Doctrine. By A. P. Peabody.
Discourses on the Rectitude of Human Nature. By Rev. G. W. Burnap, D.D.

Manuals for Sunday Schools.

First Book for Sunday Schools.
Channing's Catechism. 11th edition.
The Worcester Association's Catechism. 16th edition.
The Christian's Catechism. By L. G. Pray. 3d edition.
Child's Book on the Soul. By Rev. T. H. Gallaudet.
Cartee's Questions on the New Testament. Parts 1 and 2.
Cartee's Questions on the Pentateuch.
Allen's Questions on the Four Evangelists and the Acts. Parts 1, 2, and 3.

Ministry of Christ. By Rev. T. B. Fox.

The Acts of the Apostles. By Rev. T. B. Fox.

Lessons on the Parables. By Rev. F. D. Huntington.

Scripture Catechism of the Christian Religion. By Rev. E. Peabody.

Scripture Truths, in Questions and Answers.

Allen's Questions on Genesis.

Bible Biography. Old and New Testaments.

Abstract of Sacred History.

Nichols's Natural Theology.

Hymn and Service Book. By Hon. S. C. Phillips.

Sunday School Hymn Book, with Devotional Exercises. By L. G. Pray.

The Saviour's Life, written expressly for Children and Youth. By Rev. Edwin Chapman, of England.

The Gospel Narratives ; their Origin, Peculiarities, and Transmission. By Rev. H. A. Miles.

A Manual of Christian Doctrines. By Rev. A. B. Fuller.

Introductory Lessons on Christian Evidences. By Archbishop Whately.

REPORT.

In presenting the Twenty-third Annual Report of the Sunday School Society, it is unnecessary to refer to the causes which led to its organization. Suffice it to say that it has for its objects — the diffusion of knowledge upon the best modes of imparting religious instruction, the awakening and increasing an interest in the conversion and spiritual training of the young, and the encouragement of teachers and societies in the great work upon which they have entered. We wish to see each Sunday School connected with us so attractive as to draw in all the young in its neighborhood, and so profitable as to send forth every pupil a true disciple of Jesus, and a living child of God.

Its field of labor, in which to accomplish these noble objects, comprises, according to the last Annual Report, 236 Sunday Schools, in which are laboring 2,663 teachers, having under their charge 24,196 pupils. Nominally this is the field of labor of this Society; but really the field includes all those families and circles of companions into which these pupils go, carrying the results of their connection with the Sunday School, — a field large enough and objects noble enough to employ all the powers of an angel-host.

The Society has sought to promote these objects, — 1st, by its Annual Meeting ; 2d, by its Publications ; and, 3d, by the Visits and Addresses of its Agents. — 1. The first of these, the annual meetings, are more important than we sometimes are apt to imagine. To these gatherings come up from all parts the clergy, the superintendents and teachers of the Sunday School, the parents of the pupils, and the pupils themselves. Here, those whose souls are alive to the best interests of the young pour forth, in the time of prayer, their petitions to Almighty God for wisdom and strength, and every needed blessing upon those who have charge of this work in every place, and for blessed fruits in the hearts and lives of those for whom they labor. Here, men of long experience, and interest deepened by continued and earnest labor, give utterance to words of counsel and exhortation; increasing the fervor of our zeal, and at the same time rendering that zeal more and more according to knowledge. Here, the children-choir present in their songs a sacred channel through which the Holy Spirit descends to bless the waiting assembly. From this gathering — from speech and song and prayer — there goes forth yearly a quickening impulse, which renews the life in us all, and renders the most distant near, and the coldest more like Jesus in his work. — 2. By its publications it has also sought to bless. Of these, during the last year, the Society has caused to be printed 3,500 copies of its Twenty-second Annual Report, drawn up by the Rev. C. Brooks, Corresponding Secretary ; also 1,000 copies of Franklin's Moral Tables ; and has published 1,000 copies of Thayer's Practical Suggestions to Sunday School Teachers ; and these have been widely circulated, especially the Report of the Rev. Mr. Brooks, copies of which have been sent to every Unitarian Sunday School in the Union and the Canadas as far as practicable.

3. And, lastly, it has sent forth its agents. Of these, the Society has had, during the year, thirteen, — viz. eight clergymen and five laymen. Many visits have been made by them to schools in Boston; and, in addition to these, six of these agents report visits made to fifty places in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. These agents have not only been present on the sabbath, during the regular exercises of the schools, addressing parents, teachers, and children, but often at teachers' and Sunday School conventions, and other social gatherings. These six have made about sixty addresses. If the remaining seven agents who have not reported have done likewise, then over one hundred gatherings have been aided and blessed by their efforts. Many calls have been made for visits from agents, which it was impossible, for various reasons, to answer.

The amount of funds required to prosecute the objects of the Society is small, inasmuch as the labors of the agents are gratuitous. These funds have been derived as follows: —

From 21 Life memberships . . .	$210.00
„ 52 Annual Subscribers . . .	52.00
Balance in the Treasury last year . .	162.31
Making a total	$424.31

Of this sum the Society has expended $304.17, of which $195 was for printing, and $66.51 in defraying the expenses of the agents; leaving in the treasury, at the close of the year, April 22, 1851, $120.14.

These three — the annual meeting, the publications, and the agents — are, strictly speaking, the instrumentalities which the Society are using to promote its objects. There are two other channels opened by the direct agency of the Sunday Schools connected with it, having to so great

an extent the same object, that it seems most proper that they should be alluded to in this Report. The first of these is the Sunday School Teachers' Institute. It is well known that the teachers connected with the Sunday Schools in Boston have for years had a monthly gathering for a discussion upon some subject connected with their work. At a meeting of this association, well known as the Teachers' Social Union, it was decided to change the form of the meetings into that of a Teachers' Institute for a few months. This experiment of the Institute has been tried, and found wonderfully successful. Four very able lectures have been delivered upon the following subjects, viz. : —

1. Teaching the Bible authoritatively, by Rev. Dr. Peabody.

2. Some of the most Obvious and Important Principles of Scriptural Interpretation, by Rev. Dr. Gannett.

3. The Spirit of the Bible, and the Spirit in which it should be Taught, by Rev. Chandler Robbins.

4. The Character of Christ, and the most Impressive Way of presenting the same to the Young, by Rev. C. A. Bartol.

Each of these lecturers was succeeded by a conductor of the Institute, who gave from his experience hints concerning modes of instruction. The conductors were —

1. Gideon F. Thayer, Esq., upon the Objects of Sunday School Teaching, and the Requisites of the Teacher.

2. Geo. B. Emerson, Esq., upon the Principles of Instruction.

3. The Rev. C. Brooks, in which he aimed to Teach the Teacher how to Teach,— which, by earnest request, he kindly repeated.

4. Hon. Albert Fearing, upon the Proper Method of Conducting Adult Bible-classes.

So successful has been this experiment, that without doubt the Institute will be revived next autumn, and it is hoped that many like Institutes may be held in other places. It has also awakened a desire for a convention of Sunday School teachers.

The other agency to which reference has been made is the Children's Mission. The pupils connected with 18 Sunday Schools in the city, and four out of the city, have united their contributions, and thus raised the sum of $713, by which they have sent forth Mr. Barry, a devoted missionary, to labor for the good of more destitute or less favored children. Mr. Barry's work is exclusively among children. He gathers them into his own or other Sunday Schools, and into secular schools. He provides places for them in families out of the city, who will care for them spiritually, as well as temporally. On the sabbath as well as other days, he spends much of his time on the wharves, and in places where this class congregate, exerting a kind and salutary influence over them. And why may not *this* be introduced elsewhere?

These last two, however, are collateral. We claim not these powerful agencies for good upon our Sunday Schools as the instrumentalities originated by this Society. Returning, then, directly to ourselves, we repeat that the annual meeting, the publications, and the visits and addresses of the agents, are our channels of influence.

And now, what are the results? This no one can say. The increasing demand upon the agents for visits, the interest given to conventions and social gatherings by their presence and words, the renewed interest often manifest in the great object of Sunday School efforts after their visits, show that their labors are abundantly blessed. The same may be said of the influence of their annual meetings and of their publications. This general state-

ment of results is all that can be made: the *precise* good of any one effort or pamphlet need not be told, as it is far more profitably recorded in those benefited. Suffice it to say, that each year furnishes new reasons for thanking God that he is so abundantly blessing our endeavors.

A single word upon a difficulty under which many schools labor, and this Report closes. It shall be a brief word. A complaint appears in almost every Report made to this Society for many years, and constantly comes to the agents in their visits, of a want of teachers, or that teachers become discouraged. What is the cause of this? It is not because the work is not attractive enough to draw in many not now engaged in our Sunday Schools; it is not because either these, or those who are teachers, lack either ability or spirit, but *it is* because either they have *no definite object* in their relation, or they have *no definite plan* of carrying out that object. A teacher must have an aim. If he would be successful, he must attempt, perhaps, one of these three objects, viz.: He must merely impart religious information; or he must, in addition to instructing, endeavor to improve the habits of his pupils; or — which is the great object — he must aim to completely change the spirit, and so *christianize the scholar*. Let the teacher decide which he will attempt for the time being. Is it to instruct merely? Then at a proper time, before the school-hour, let the teacher understand just *what* knowledge is to be imparted during the time of the coming session of the school, and just *how*, — *i.e.* by what illustrations and the like. If the teacher is in doubt as to *what* or *how*, let him consult his pastor or some qualified friend, and be sure that the work for that day is clearly laid out. Very soon that teacher will need no aid in preparing, save the usual helps, always near, of commentaries and the like, and will rejoice at the increase of his

interest, and the prospect of success. Let those who instruct in order to improve the habits, or those who aim at bringing the child's *spirit* into perfect harmony with that of Jesus, pursue the same course, having the object of his connection with his class clearly, *ever* clearly, before him, and the plan of each season of instruction and influence definitely marked out; and, if like causes produce like effects, a great change will be effected for the better. New powers will be revealed to aid desponding teachers; and hearts, earnestly desiring to do some good in the world, will be more surely gratified.

S. H. WINKLEY,

Corresponding Secretary.

REPORT

OF THE

CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIETY'S AGENTS,

Referred to in the preceding pages by the Corresponding Secretary.

THE agency of the Sunday School Society has steadily pursued its course, during the year past, as in preceding years. A good degree of interest has been manifested in its labors and efforts, and not a few calls have been made for its aid, which — from a variety of circumstances — it was impossible to respond to. The principal were, that the invitations either came too late or were for *sabbath* occasions, when those of the agents who have the care of parishes could not be absent from home; and the lay-agents were previously engaged, or unaccustomed or unprepared to engage in such a service. A large number of visits has been made to Sunday Schools when in regular session, as well as at the opening and closing of those that are not continued throughout the year. Sunday School conventions have been attended, rural gatherings, and various excursions, whose object has been the direct or indirect improvement and happiness of the schools; and it is humbly hoped that the efforts of the laborers have not been wholly unattended with good results.

They have to acknowledge, with much satisfaction, the invariable kindness and respect with which they have been

received, and the apparent gratification of the *pupils*, as well as of the *teachers*, belonging to the schools addressed.

From the want of full and perfect returns, it will be impossible to furnish the usual statistical items complete. But six of the agents have visited and addressed schools, conventions, &c., in Boston (many different schools), Brookline, Brighton, Beverly, Barre, Brooklyn, Conn., Brunswick, Me., Chelsea, Cambridge, Charlestown, Clinton, Concord, Dracut, Dover, N. H., Dublin, N. H., East Boston, Eastport, Me., Fitchburg, Framingham,* Jaffray, N. H., Keene, N. H., Lowell, Marlboro', Mansfield, Newburyport, Lexington, Norton, Northampton, New Bedford, Nantucket, Newport, R. I., Plymouth, Peterborough, N. H., Portsmouth, N. H., Providence, R. I., Quincy, Quincy Point, Rowe, South Boston, Somerville, Sherburne, Sterling, Sharon, South Hingham, Springfield, Somerville, Taunton, Tyngsborough, Templeton, Watertown, West Bridgewater, Worcester, Wayland, and Ware, N. H.

If the other six — not reported — have done as much, there has been an amount of work performed in the year, considerably beyond that of previous years.

It is to be hoped that diligent inquiry will in future be made as to the condition of the schools, when visited, in whatever tends to give them elevation of character, or make them efficient means of spiritual advancement to all connected with them; and that the results will be available at our annual meetings, for the information and benefit of all friends of Sunday Schools.

* The Semi-annual Meeting of the Middlesex Sunday School Society was held at this place, May 21, which was attended by one or more of our agents. One of them says in his Report: "The new feature in our Middlesex Sunday School Meeting of female teachers' reports promises a fresh interest and fervor in this already prosperous Society. It gave great animation to our last meeting, and is worthy the regard and imitation of other similar bodies." It will be remembered that the Parent Society set an example of this in their last year's extended Annual Report.

An unusually large number of life-members * has been added to the Society's roll, partly through the suggestions of the agents, during the year; which is a circumstance, not merely important in itself, inasmuch as it furnished greatly needed aid to the treasury, but especially pleasing, as in most instances it was done by the contributions of the teachers and pupils, as an expression of regard or gratitude to the pastor or superintendent connected with the school from which the membership issued.

We hope the example will become contagious, and that similar good works will continue, and be multiplied in the years that are before us.

In conclusion: Believing that, by fidelity in our personal and associated capacity, a much higher good may be secured to our schools than has hitherto been attained, we most earnestly hope and pray that the future may find each one of us most devoutly laboring in this service, as if he felt that success depended exclusively on his individual exertions.

G. F. THAYER,

Chairman.

Boston, *May* 28, 1851.

* Note by the Treasurer. — The number of life-members for the year 1850-51 is twenty-two, viz. Rev. Horatio Alger, Marlboro'; P. Houghton, Eastport, Me.; E. D. Boit and Lucretia Williams, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury; Rev. C. H. Brigham, James P. Ellis, and Mrs. Mary Borden, Taunton; Hon. Solomon Lincoln, Hingham; Hon. Albert Fearing, Boston, by his Bible-class at Hingham; Rev. John F. Moors, Deerfield; Hon. Salma Hale, Keene, N.H.; G. F. Thayer, Quincy; Caleb Nourse, Bolton; Mrs. Prudence Williams, Taunton; John W. Foster, Portsmouth, N.H.; Francis Brown, Boston; Jonathan K. Smith Dublin, N.H.; Seth Whitman, jun., Pembroke; Thomas R. Boutelle, M.D., Fitchburg; Rev. Thos. P. Allen, Sterling; Rev. Charles Brooks, Boston; and James H. Baker, Portland, Me.

As schools or societies may be desirous of contributing to the funds of the agency, to aid in visiting their own and other schools, and at the same time to testify their affection and regard for their pastor or superintendent, the following article from the Constitution of the Society is subjoined: "Art. 12. The sum of Ten Dollars, paid into the treasury by or for any one person, shall constitute such person a life-member of the Society."

ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING.

THIS Society held its Twenty-third Anniversary on the evening of May 28, in the Federal Street Church; Hon. STEPHEN C. PHILLIPS, of Salem, presiding. Prayer was offered by Rev. JOHN WHITE, of Dedham.

The preceding Report having been read by Rev. S. H. WINKLEY, the Corresponding Secretary of the Society, Rev. H. F. HARRINGTON, of Lawrence, rose and moved the acceptance of the Report, and addressed the Society on the encouragements of the Sunday School teacher. He said there were many who felt but little interest in the duties of the Sunday School teacher. There are many who need to feel that there is even any thing valuable in the Sunday School at all. What shall I say to encourage such teachers? They were not aware of the power of one human soul, actuated by a living faith, over other human souls with which it comes in contact. This power and influence, as one of the best means for their encouragement, were illustrated at some length.

Another encouragement is derived from the results often produced by the faithful use of opportunities. He then mentioned the case of a young man he knew some years ago in Providence, who was engaged in mercantile pursuits, and as a teacher in the Sunday School. On one occasion, the young man expressed to him the desponding

conviction that he should never be able to realize the desire he had always cherished of becoming a religious teacher. He should never be any thing but what he then was. The speaker said he thanked God that that opportunity was not lost; for that young man had become one of the most efficient and useful laborers in this great field of moral instruction, and now occupies the position (pointing to the Secretary of the Society) where you see him, which no man is capable of filling with greater ability and success.

He then mentioned the instance of an auctioneer who was selling books; and the sales not being very successful, and but few in attendance, he lost his temper and indulged in profanity. A young man who was at the sale, the next day kindly remonstrated with him on the subject of his profanity the night before. Most persons, he said, would have had no faith in any good result from such a course, and would have concluded that it made no difference with this man. Yet what was the result? A friend of the gentleman who administered the rebuke, some time afterward asked him if he had ever heard of the auctioneer whom he rebuked for his profanity. "No," said he. "Well," said his friend, "after that conversation you held with him, he became an altered man; he was never heard to swear again, and has since died, a sincere and humble Christian."

Mr. Harrington closed his remarks with an earnest exhortation to fidelity in this holy cause.

Rev. Alonzo Hill, of Worcester, spoke of the perils, temptations, and evil influences that beset the young. He could never look at the beautiful face of childhood, or the happy groups of children in the Sunday School, without thinking of the perils in which they are ushered into the world, and that attend them through life. He could not

help thinking of the dangers they encounter in this our own time and country, and of the readiness there is to encounter these perils. It did not surprise him that so many who begin life innocent, fall into temptation and sin. The wonder is that any should pass safely through them, and reach the haven of purity and rest. How are we to prepare the young to meet these perils? Much might be done by faithful family ministration. But the great dependence is the Sunday School. Through its training and instructions, they shall be fitted to encounter the perils of life.

The speaker illustrated the susceptibility of the young mind to impressions, by comparing it with the plate on which impressions are received by the daguerreotype art. Its polished surface is free from all defects, and, having been prepared by the artist, is exposed to the action of the light, when it receives an indelible impression of the objects reflected upon it. So it is with the mind of the child. If it lives and breathes an atmosphere of piety and truth at home, surrounded by examples of true Christian character; if it is brought to the church, where, on the sabbath, consecrated by our fathers to religious worship, the words of Jesus are heard, and his holy life and character are represented to the mind, it will receive these glorious impressions, and they will remain for ever. If the child has been taught to read the Scriptures, every page thus engraved on its mind and heart will remain. It may read thereafter the monkish legend, or any other similar book; and, when these have passed away and are forgotten, the impressions received from the Scriptures will abide. The spirit in which the teacher comes to his work is the important thing. If he have the right spirit, he will impress that spirit upon the hearts of the children placed under his care.

The Rev. W. R. Alger, of Roxbury, was next called upon. He spoke substantially as follows: —

We probably do not know how large and important an institution the Sunday School is, taken as a whole. It contains five millions of pupils and one million of teachers. That is one person for every hundred and fifty of the whole human race. It is but a little while since the institution was founded. How rapidly it has become so large and influential an agency! It will certainly become larger and more important every year.

But the Sunday School seems as important, and presents as strong claims upon our earnest interest, when we consider the transcendent value of its individual aim and work, as it does when we reflect upon its magnitude taken as a whole. On the one hand, there is an immense multitude of tender and guileless children, their natures now unperverted and full of all noble possibilities. On the other hand, there is an awful throng of temptations, corruption, dangers, through which they must pass. How many in the journey will falter, will lose their bright promises, and present themselves at last at Heaven's gate as disfigured and worn-out pilgrims; their robe of life, so white and spotless once, all bedewed with tears, stained with guilt, rent by thorns, and soiled in the dust! Now the Sunday School endeavors betimes so to arm them with truth and purity, with warnings, and high principles, and Christian piety, that they will pass unharmed the great ordeals of life. Therefore, it is plain, whether we regard the Sunday School in the largeness of its extent and opportunity, or in the holy elevation of its individual effort, it is an institution eminently worthy of our confidence and devoted support and furthering zeal.

The Sunday School teacher has every motive to earnestly discharge the duties of his office, to do it with zeal

and perseverance. The uncertainty of the results of his instruction, when his pupils shall meet their foes in the world, instead of discouraging, should stimulate him to greater fidelity. He should be animated by the assurance, that every disinterested effort has a compensating effect on him who makes it, even when it fails of any other fruit. Again, we know that God reckons with us, not from results, but from motives and endeavors. And, finally, it is certain that there is a greater probability of adequate return and success in this than in any other field of moral labor; for this labor is expended on the young, whose habits, characters, lives, are just now in the process of formation. And there are thousands of honored men and saintly women on earth who owe most of what is best and happiest in their present position and influence to pious and faithful Sunday School teachers.

In a little while we shall all pass away. Soon our shadows will lengthen behind us; and the eternal shadow before us, into which our mystic pathway lies, will approach. Let us, in the sincere reverence and love of God, and in the unaffected appreciation of moral truth and virtue, determine to do what good we can, and leave a good influence still to work when we are gone.

Rev. Geo. W. Briggs, of Plymouth, addressed the meeting on the objects and true methods of Sunday School instruction. He said he was struck with that part of the report which pointed out to the teacher the necessity of having a distinct and definite object in his mind. In our great jealousy of teaching children systems of doctrine, we have fallen into a miscellaneous method of instruction. The teacher meets his class on the Sabbath, and spends an hour with them in illustrating and explaining to them some moral duty; and, on the next Sabbath, the same course is pursued with regard to some other

precept or duty. The teacher has no definite object before him, and no system in his method. It appears to me that the first thing is to have some distinct aim and object to accomplish. And what should that be? It ought not to be simply to give instruction — not merely to correct some evil habit in the child, though each of these is important; but it should be to bring the child into a condition of mind and heart in which its temper and disposition shall become thoroughly Christian, — to that turning-point in life when it shall become possessed of the spirit of Jesus, and be willing to follow him. His object should be to bring every one of his class to this state; to accomplish, through divine aid, their conversion.

The speaker said he was not able to be present on Tuesday evening at the meeting of the American Unitarian Association, which he regretted very much, as he had understood it was one of great interest. A brother had there spoken of justification by faith, in which he had been told the true doctrine was set forth, — justification by a living faith, — realizing the truth of the great facts of the gospel, so as to be moved and actuated by them to a divine life. This faith is what we need to give the child. If we instil into the mind the principles of conduct which such a faith inspires, we can trust to the future. We know not what temptations it may encounter, what perils it may have to pass through; but we do know, if it has this living faith in the great realities of the Christian religion, it will be safe. The aim of the teacher should be to impart this faith; and all matters of instruction, and the correction of particular habits, will be subordinate to this; all other things in the system of Sunday School instruction will serve the great end.

The speaker said he had as much repugnance to teaching a system of theology in the Sunday School as any one

could have; but may we not have a systematic method of instruction, without teaching dogmatic theology? He thought we might. Let the Sunday School teacher lead the child to that source where we must all go, — the life of Jesus, and give him a distinct and clear idea of him, till it can apprehend something of that true life which he exemplified on earth. In doing this, there will be a definite aim, and there may be system in the method. A true ideal of the life of Jesus is what we should present to the mind of the child; and the best system is that which shall make him acquainted with it in the order of Christ's actual life, until he is led into its inmost spirit, and becomes sanctified by it. The child loves to hear things in the concrete form; something which it can see, and hold in its hand, and take in pieces, and thus become familiar with it. And so the life of Jesus should be presented, and it will become to it doctrine and life. Is not this an aim,— something that would give definiteness, clearness, and success? What is it we would wish to do to keep the child from shipwreck in the voyage of life? Is it not that it may have Jesus with it in the ship; and, when storms arise, and the Master appears to be asleep, that it may go and awake him, saying, "Master, save or I perish"? Thus, in the continual presence of Jesus to the soul, shall it find deliverance and safety.

Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, of Salem, the President of the Society, then offered some closing remarks. He spoke of the responsible character of the relation between teacher and people. He thought this responsibility was not sufficiently recognized and felt. The relation should not be entered into except from the highest motives, and he would have some act of solemn recognition observed in entering upon it. It is a relation that should continue for a long time, and should be undertaken in view of all

its responsibilities. The great fact upon which the necessity of the Sunday School rests is, that it affords an opportunity of doing that which cannot be so well done anywhere else. It is a great school for the formation of Christian character, where principles are implanted in the minds of our children that shall go with them through life. He agreed with one of the gentlemen who had spoken of the perils and evil influences which surround the young. It seemed astonishing to him that so many escape them. Mr. Phillips closed with an eloquent exhortation to put our trust in the divine aid, without which all our efforts would be useless and unavailing.

The meeting, the report of which has been taken from the "Christian Register," was one of deep interest; the exercises were listened to with marked attention and pleasure, and were closed at a seasonable hour. Several hymns were sung by a select choir from the Rev. Mr. Barnard's school, and the audience was dismissed with a benediction.

THE

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE

PROCEEDINGS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING,

TWENTY-SIXTH OF MAY, 1852.

BOSTON:

SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS,

124, WASHINGTON STREET.

1852.

11589

Wm Smith, Esq.
Aug. 2. 1867.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON AND SON,

No. 22, School Street.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,

Organized April 18, 1827.

OFFICERS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

Presidents.

	Elected.	Resigned.
Rev. J. Tuckerman, D.D.	1827	1829
Hon. Jonathan Philipps	1829	1832
Rev. J. Tuckerman, D.D.	1832	1840*
Dr. J. F. Flagg	1841	1842
Hon. Stephen C. Phillips	1842	

Vice-Presidents.

Moses Grant	1827	1829
Rev. J. Tuckerman, D.D.	1829	1832
Hon. Wm. Sullivan, Boston, Mass.	1832	1834
Rev. Henry Ware, jun. Cambridge	1832	1843
Rev. Joseph Allen, D.D. Northborough	1832	1849
Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, Salem	1832	1842
Wm. P. Rice, Esq. Cincinnati, Ohio	1832	1844*
John W. Foster, Esq. Portsmouth, N.H.	1832	1851*
Rev. Samuel Gilman, Charleston, S.C.	1832	1839
Rev. S. G. Bulfinch, Augusta, Geo.	1832	1849
Dr. J. F. Flagg, M.D. Boston	1834	1841
Rev. James F. Clarke, Louisville, Ken.	1839	1841
Rev. F. T. Gray, Boston	1841	
Rev. J. P. B. Storer, Syracuse	1841	1844*
Gideon F. Thayer, Esq. Boston	1842	1852
Hon. Samuel Hoar, Concord	1844	
Rev. G. W. Hosmer, Buffalo, N.Y.	1844	
Rev. W. G. Elliot, St. Louis, Missouri	1844	1849
Rev. Calvin Lincoln, Fitchburg	1849	

* Departed this life.

	Elected.	Resigned.
Rev. Abiel A. Livermore, Cincinnati, Ohio	1849	
Rev. J. H. Heywood, Louisville, Ken.	1849	
Rev. A. P. Peabody, Portsmouth, N.H.	1852	
Elijah Cobb, Esq. Boston, Mass.	1852	

Corresponding Secretaries.

Dr. J. F. Flagg	1827	1833
Edward Blake, Esq.	1833	1836
Dr. F. H. Gray	1836	1838
Rev. A. B. Muzzey	1838	1842
Rev. R. C. Waterston	1842	1847
Rev. Charles Brooks	1847	1850
Rev. S. H. Winkley	1850	1852
Rev. W. R. Alger	1852	

Recording Secretaries.

Rev. F. T. Gray	1827	1830
Dr. Thomas Gray	1830	1834
Mr. John Gage	1834	1835
,, John S. Williams	1835	1836
,, Artemas Carter	1836	1839
,, J. H. Weeks	1839	1841
,, S. G. Simpkins	1841	

Treasurers.

B. H. Greene, Esq.	1828	1830
George A. Sampson, Esq.	1830	1835
Lewis G. Pray, Esq.	1835	

Delegates.*

		Appointed.
From West Parish Sunday School	Thomas Hardy	1827
,, ,,	C. Andrews	1831
,, Hancock	S. H. Barnes	1827

* This list of Delegates is probably imperfect. The Sunday Schools have been very remiss in appointing these officers; and the Delegates have not always reported themselves to the Recording Secretary or to the Society.

From Hancock Sunday School	.	G. A. Sampson	1828
" "	.	F. T. Gray	1831
" "	.	John Gage	1833
" "	.	Geo. Forbes	1835
" "	.	Henry Clapp	1837
" "	.	James Tolman	1841
" "	.	F. W. Lincoln	1849
" Franklin	.	J. N. Daniell	1827
" "	.	Dr. J. F. Flagg	1831
" Howard	.	Dr. E. G. Davis	1827
" "	.	Geo. Merrill	1829
" "	.	B. H. Greene	1831
" "	.	Elijah Cobb	1832
" "	.	R. W. Bayley	1841
" "	.	Chas. Faulkner	1843
" "	.	J. N. Daniell	1844
" Twelfth Congregational	.	L. G. Pray	1827
" "	.	Benjamin Seaver	1837
" "	.	Artemas Carter	1841
" "	.	Francis Brown	1846
" Hollis-street	.	Stephen Fairbanks	1827
" "	.	E. B. Thayer	1828
" "	.	John Dall	1831
" "	.	Otis Everett, jun.	1834
" Federal-street	.	G. F. Thayer	1827
" "	.	Dr. J. T. Flagg	1832
" "	.	Sam. E. Sewall	1835
" "	.	Edward Wigglesworth	1841
" Brattle-street	.	Dr. J. P. Spooner	1831
" "	.	Geo. W. Bond	1832
" "	.	Edward E. Hale	1841
" New Franklin	.	David Lane	1828
" Purchase-street	.	William S. Russell	1832
" "	.	H. B. Townsend	1835
" "	.	H. L. Daggett	1847
" Chauncy Place	.	David Lane	1828
" "	.	William R. Sumner	1831
" "	.	Rev. Chas. Brooks	1845
" South Congregational	.	Charles Bowen	1829
" "	.	Wm. Whiting	1835

From South Congregational School	W. P. Jarvis	1837
„ New North	Francis Parkman	1829
„ „	Edward Blake	1831
„ „	S. J. Beals	1834
„ „	W. A. Weeks	1835
„ Christian Society	Rev. J. V. Himes	1831
„ Church of the Saviour	W. R. Sumner	1847
„ „	Albert Fearing	1848
„ Church of the Disciples	James Whiting	1847
„ Suffolk-street Chapel	Martin Lincoln	1847
„ „	B. H. Greene	1849
„ Beach-street	H. L. Daggett	1849
„ Bulfinch-street	J. W. Paige	1841
„ „	David Paige	1843
„ „	E. A. Wadleigh	1850

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	Elected.	Resigned.
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„ F. T. Gray	1840	1841
Lewis G. Pray, Esq.	1841	1848
G. F. Thayer, Esq.	1848	1851
Rev. S. H. Winkley	1851	

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Rev. A. B. Muzzey	1841	1852
„ F. T. Gray	1841	
J. F. Flagg, M.D.	1841	1843
Rev. R. C. Waterston	1841	
Richard W. Bailey, Esq.	1841	1847
William P. Jarvis, Esq.	1841	1842
Isaiah Bangs, Esq.	1843	1849
Geo. G. Channing, Esq.	1844	1850
Rev. C. Brooks	1845	
„ C. Robbins	1846	1847
J. W. Andrews, Esq.	1846	1847
S. G. Simpkins, Esq.	1847	1850
Rev. J. F. W. Ware	1848	1850
„ S. H. Winkley	1849	1851

	Elected.	Resigned.
Rev. Joshua Young	1850	1852
„ F. W. Holland	1850	1851
Benjamin H. Greene, Esq.	1850	1851
Rev. Adams Ayer	1850	
Hon. Albert Fearing	1851	
Francis Brown, Esq.	1851	
Geo. W. Warren, Esq.	1851	1852
Rev. Calvin Lincoln	1852	
George Merrill, Esq.	1852	
Mr. Francis Tiffany	1852	
„ James Pierce	1852	
„ F. A. Tenny	1852	
„ S. S. Hunting	1852	
„ Edward J. Young	1852	
„ Richard Metcalf	1852	

LIFE MEMBERS.

The following Clergymen and Superintendents have been made Life Members of the Sunday School Society, by contributions from their Sunday Schools or others in their behalf: —

Adams, Samuel *	Saco, Me.
Alger, Rev. W. R.	Roxbury.
Allen, Rev. Joseph	Northborough.
Adams, Moses	Dublin, N.H.
Adams, Samuel	Milton.
Aiken, Benjamin F.*	Lowell.
Allen, Rev. Thomas P.	Sterling.
Alger, Rev. Horatio	Marlborough.
Bigelow, Rev. Andrew, D.D.	Boston.
Brown, James W.	Framingham.
Barrett, Rev. Samuel, D.D.	Boston.
Barrett, N. A.	Boston.
Babcock, Rev. W. G.	Lunenburg.
Bourne, George W.	Kennebunk, Me.
Brown, Francis	Boston.
Boutelle, Thomas R., M.D.	Fitchburg.
Brooks, Rev. Charles	Boston.
Baker, James H.	Portland, Me.
Boit, Edward D.	Roxbury, J.P.
Borden, Mary, Mrs.	Taunton.
Brigham, Rev. Charles H.	Taunton.
Bancroft, George	Groton, Mass.
Cobb, Elijah	Boston.
Cooke, Hon. B.	Keene, N.H.
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Crosby, W. G.	Belfast, Me.
Clapp, Thaddeus	Dorchester.

* Deceased.

Chandler, Rev. Seth	Shirley.
Cushing, Rev. W.	Bedford.
Clarke, Nathan	Waltham.
Cole, Andrew A.	Watertown.
Clarke, Manlius S.	Boston.
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Foster, John W.*	Portsmouth, N.H.
Foster, Charles	Somerville.
Fearing, Albert	Boston.
Gill, Caleb, jun.	Boston.
Gray, Rev. F. T.	Boston.
Gannett, Rev. E. S., D.D.	Boston.
Green, Asher	Fitchburg.
Hunt, N. P.	Framingham.
Holland, Sarah *	Needham.
Holland, Rev. F. W.	Boston.
Hall, Rev. Nathaniel	Dorchester.
Hartwell, J. M.	Littleton.
Hews, Samuel	Weston.
Houghton, Patmon	Eastport, Me.
Hale, Salma	Keene, N.H.
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Jarvis, W. P.	Boston.
Keen, G. W.	Lynn.
Kendall, Asa S.	Groton.
Kingman, John W.	Dover, N.H.
Lambert, Rev. Henry	East Cambridge.
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Lincoln, A. Sydney	Templeton.
Lincoln, Martin	Boston.
Livermore, Rev. A. A.	Cincinnati.
Locke, Artemas, jun.	West Cambridge.
Lunt, Rev. W. P.	Quincy.
Lunt, Mrs. W. P.	Quincy.

Lincoln, Solomon	Hingham.
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Moors, Rev. John F.	Deerfield.
Newell, Rev. William	Cambridge.
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Sears, Rev. E. H.	Wayland.
Spooner, John P., M.D.	Dorchester.
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Sewell, Mrs. E. Q.	Scituate.
Sargent, Rev. J. T.	Boston.
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Tilden, George	Keene, N.H.
Thayer, Gideon F.	Quincy.
Whitaker, E. K.	Needham.
Whitaker, Mrs. E. K.*	Needham.
Warren, P. W.*	Lowell.
Ware, Rev. J. F. W.	Cambridgeport.
White, Josiah	Petersham.
Waite, J. A.	Hubbardston.
Whiting, James	Boston.

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*** As Schools or Societies may be desirous of contributing to the funds of the Agency, to aid in visiting their own and other Schools, and at the same time to testify their affection and regard for their pastor or superintendent, the following article from the Constitution of the Society is subjoined : —

Art. 12. — The sum of Ten Dollars, paid into the treasury by or for any one person, shall constitute such person a Life Member of the Society.

BOOKS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Livermore's Commentaries on the Gospels and the Acts. 3 vols.
Ware's Life of the Saviour.
Ware on the Formation of the Christian Character.
Greenwood's Lives of the Apostles.
Milman's History of the Jews.
Bulfinch's Holy Land and its Inhabitants.
Robinson's Dictionary of the Bible. (Calmet's.)
Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge.
Moral and Spiritual Culture. By Rev. R. C. Waterston.
Hints to Sunday School Teachers. By Rev. T. B. Fox.
History of Sunday Schools, and of the Religious Education of the Young, from the Earliest Times. By Lewis G. Pray.
Sunday School Teacher's Guide. By Rev. A. B. Muzzey.
Lectures on Christian Doctrine. By A. P. Peabody.
Discourses on the Rectitude of Human Nature. By Rev. G. W. Burnap, D.D.
Kitto's Cyclopedia of the Bible.
Smith's Pilgrimage to Egypt.
Layard's Nineveh.

MANUALS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

First Book for Sunday Schools.
Channing's Catechism. 11th edition.
The Worcester Association's Catechism. 16th edition.
The Christian's Catechism. By L. G. Pray. 3d edition.
Child's Book on the Soul. By Rev. T. H. Gallaudet.
Cartee's Questions on the New Testament. Parts 1 and 2.
Cartee's Questions on the Pentateuch.
Allen's Questions on the Four Evangelists and the Acts. Parts 1, 2, and 3.

Ministry of Christ. By Rev. T. B. Fox.
The Acts of the Apostles. By Rev. T. B. Fox.
Lessons on the Parables. By Rev. F. D. Huntington.
Scripture Catechism of the Christian Religion. By Rev. E. Peabody.
Scripture Truths, in Questions and Answers.
Allen's Questions on Genesis.
Bible Biography. Old and New Testaments.
Abstract of Sacred History.
Nichols's Natural Theology.
Hymn and Service Book. By Hon. S. C. Phillips.
Sunday School Hymn Book, with Devotional Exercises. By L. G. Pray.
The Saviour's Life, written expressly for Children and Youth. By Rev. Edwin Chapman, of England.
The Gospel Narratives; their Origin, Peculiarities, and Transmission. By Rev. H. A. Miles.
A Manual of Christian Doctrines. By Rev. A. B. Fuller.
Introductory Lessons on Christian Evidences. By Archbishop Whately.

The following are the Manuals referred to in the present Report.

Early Religious Lessons.
Palestine and the Hebrew People.
Lessons on the Old Testament.
Life of Christ.
Books and Characters of the New Testament.
Lessons upon Religious Duties and Christian Morals.
Doctrines of Scripture.
Scenes from Christian History.

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*** *Communications to be addressed to the Chairman of the Agents, 7, Bulfinch-street, Boston.*

REPORT.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago, there were, in Boston, seven Unitarian Sabbath Schools. As from those schools this Society derived its existence, it may be well to note, not only its origin, but also briefly the years of their birth.

SECT. I. — ORIGIN OF THIS SOCIETY.

Forty years ago, the ladies of the West Parish (Rev. Dr. Lowell's) supported a "Week-day Charity School," the teacher of which was moved by the spirit of the Messiah to open a Sunday School. That Sunday School was the second in the United States, and the first in Boston. The teacher continued her school for ten years. At the end of that time, namely in 1822, a Parish Sunday School was formed in connection with the West Parish, when her scholars were united with it. In the same year (1822), two young men (Rev. F. T. Gray and Mr. B. H. Greene), influenced by the same Christian spirit, began to lay plans for opening another Sunday School in Hanover-street. They worked with success; for, on June 22, 1823, the Hancock Sunday School com-

menced with forty-five children in the morning, and sixty in the afternoon. The influence of this good work was felt. Others, moved by the same Christian impulse, opened another school immediately in Franklin-street, called the Franklin Sunday School. The Hancock School was not satisfied with its own most abundant prosperity, but, in three years after its formation, sent forth heralds, who gathered the Howard Sunday School in Merrimac-street, now connected with Pitts-street Chapel. Soon after these, the Sunday Schools connected with the Brattle-street, Hollis-street, and Twelfth Congregational Churches, were organized.

The experiment of instructing children in the truth, which was then but an experiment, and of bringing them under the direct influence of the spirit of Jesus, was found to be wonderfully successful, and awakened in the minds of the laborers a desire to increase the number and usefulness of these nurseries of piety. To accomplish this, the teachers of the Franklin Sunday School proposed to form an association of the teachers of these seven city schools, and invite those of the vicinity to unite with them. The city schools were accordingly invited to send delegates to attend a meeting for the purpose of considering the subject. The schools accepted the invitation, and sent their delegates. After thoroughly discussing the question, those delegates decided to form the association. They appointed a Committee to prepare a Constitution; and, on the evening of April 18, 1827, this Society was formed by the adoption of the Constitution then proposed, and the appointment of officers, and was called the Boston Sunday School Society. That was twenty-five years ago. We now celebrate the quarter-of-a-century anniversary, and it therefore becomes us to give a brief abstract of its history. According to the

first Constitution, the officers of the Society consisted of a President, Vice-President, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer. With these five officers were united a teacher from each of the city schools, to whom was committed the care of the Society; and these were called a Board of Directors. The Society itself held four public meetings each year, — an annual and three quarterly meetings, — for the purpose of hearing reports from the several Superintendents of the city schools, and for mutual counsel and encouragement. The Board of Directors met as often as was deemed necessary.

It will be observed, from these statements, that the original field of labor which this Society proposed to itself was about the same as that of the present Sunday-school Teachers' Institute, namely, Boston and vicinity. Hence its first name, — the Boston Sunday-school Society. To understand more fully the operations and early progress of this association, let us glance at its doings during the first two years.

Sect. II. — The First Two Years.

The Society's principal mode of labor at this time was its meetings. It has already been said that the Constitution required an annual and three quarterly meetings of the Society, and occasional Directors' meetings. At the Directors' meetings, one of which was held each month, the subjects brought before them, and earnestly discussed, were: The best mode of instruction; The provision to be made for the needy scholars being brought into our schools; The reprint of good books, and the writing of others of a more elevated character, for the use of the schools.

The character of the quarterly meetings may be learned from the following extract from a notice in the "Christian Register" of Sept. 8, 1827: —

"The first quarterly meeting of the Boston Sunday School Society was held . . . at the vestry of the church in Berry-street. . . . . The meeting was opened by an address to the Throne of Grace, by the Rev. Mr. Ware. The purposes of the meeting having been explained from the chair, several interesting verbal reports were made by the Superintendents concerning the state of their schools, the plan of instruction pursued in each, the books now in use as manuals, and the want which was felt of others, more consonant to their views and feelings than can now be obtained, both as manuals and for the juvenile libraries, which are in almost all cases connected with the schools, the books of which are sought for by the children with the greatest avidity. The statements made in these reports, of the rapid increase of the schools in a very short period, their present flourishing condition, notwithstanding the many disadvantages under which some of them labored at first, and the general and warm interest now manifested by both teachers and scholars, were gratifying and highly encouraging."

The Society held its first annual meeting in this (Federal-street) Church, Dec. 12, 1827. The church was filled; reports were presented by the Superintendents, and by the Corresponding Secretary; and various addresses were made.

During this first year, — or rather seven months, for the Society was organized in April, and held its first annual meeting in December, — the Directors held seven meetings, the Society two quarterly meetings and the annual meeting; all of which were in the highest degree calculated to deepen the interest in the great work of

Sunday Schools, and to increase and improve the means for spiritual instruction. The influence of the Society was felt. The whole denomination began to breathe the same spirit, and prayers and efforts increased for the wide spread and prosperity of Sunday Schools.

During the second year, the Directors held eleven meetings. The principal feature of this year's labor in their department was an arrangement entered into with the American Unitarian Association for the publication of books.

The Society held its three regular quarterly meetings, at which questions of stirring interest to Sunday-school teachers were discussed, — questions which lead us to suspect that, in those days, they had "a zeal," and that it was "according to knowledge." I give the first two subjects of discussion this year: 1. "The advantages our schools would derive if all the male teachers would enter them with the determination to hold themselves ready to take the direction or superintendence of the school, if occasion should require. 2. "In what way may Sunday-school teachers contribute most effectually to the good of the families to which their pupils belong?" At one quarterly meeting, the mode of operations adopted by one of the schools was stated, and made the subject of discussion; at another, "The need and practicability of a central teachers' library in the city" was the subject. Besides the regular quarterly meetings, the Society held three others this year; making, in all (of Society and Directors), seventeen, every one of which was doing somewhat to further the good work in which they were engaged. Having this active Christian spirit, they prospered. We are not, therefore, surprised to learn, from the next annual report, that the Franklin Sunday School had this year increased so rapidly that it was divided, and two

were formed from it, — one going to Purchase-street, and the other going to Chauncy Place, and called the Chauncy Sunday School. Another school was gathered at the South End, called the South Congregational. In all of the older schools, a growing interest, increasing numbers, and improved plans, showed decisive evidence of prosperity. Nor was the influence confined to the city. Thirty towns communicated with the Corresponding Secretary, announcing as many schools in existence, having an aggregate of 2667 pupils, and 438 teachers. Twenty-six of these schools reported libraries. All, except five of these schools, have been formed within three years; and *two-thirds of them had been formed since the organization of this Society.* Their plans of instruction varied; but, in most, Bible exposition was the mode of teaching.

Of course, it would be lengthening this Report unnecessarily to state, even briefly, each year's transactions. I have given this glance of the first two years as the best way of making visible the early spirit of the Society. It will be noticed that Boston and vicinity soon ceased to be the limit of the Society's operations. In 1832 the Constitution was changed, allowing the choice of eight Vice-Presidents, and not long after making provision for life-membership. Then came the appointment of agents, so that now the Society's labor was, if any thing, less for Boston and vicinity than for other parts. What remains of its history I will endeavor to group under four heads.

One great object of the association was to enlarge the number and size of these sources of instruction. We will therefore notice —

Sect. III. — The Increase of Sunday Schools.

There were, in —

	Schools.	Pupils.	Teachers.
1827, in Boston	7	—	—
in other places	19*	—	—
	26		
1828, in Boston	9	1,089	202
in other places	30	2,667	438
	39	3,756	640
1829, in Boston	12	1,224	232
in other places	58	5,585	890
	70	6,809	1,122
1830, in all places	98†	9,152	1,529
1832,‡ „ „	119	10,838	1,848
1833, „ „	124	11,780	—
1834, „ „	133	13,190	2,146
1835, „ „	135	13,795	2,388

From this time, no circulars for information upon these points were issued until 1850, — fifteen years afterwards. It will be seen that, in 1827, twenty-six schools only were in existence, and some of these had a very doubtful existence. At the end of eight years, there were 135 schools, 13,795 scholars, and 2388 individuals engaged as teachers. Nor did the progress of the work stop with the discontinuance of the Annual Report of increase; for, in 1850, when the statistics are next gathered upon these points, we have, —

	Schools.	Pupils.	Teachers.
1850, in Boston,	18	2,635	377
in other places,	218	21,561	7,452
Or a total of	236	24,196	7,829

* That is, this number reported themselves to the Corresponding Secretary. Twelve of these had been commenced within three years.

† No increase of the number of schools in Boston *reported* until 1850.

‡ This year the annual meeting was held in May, instead of the preceding December. From this year there is an error of one year in the number of the Report. Thus, last year's Report is called the twenty-third; it should be twenty-fourth.

Now, it is the common custom for an agent of a society to seize hold of an increase like this to call for the applause of the world upon what it has done. And it is pleasant to be able to say that abundant evidence may be brought, proving the Christian zeal of this Society in former times and in more recent; but I cannot help saying here, that there is some cause of humility, as well as well as of triumph. I speak more particularly with reference to this city. It will be seen that in 1835 there were, in Boston, 12 schools, 1882 pupils, and 331 teachers, — a goodly increase from 9 schools, 1089 pupils, and 202 teachers, in seven years; that is, remembering that Sunday Schools were then of debatable utility. Then, however, there were regular reports from the various schools, often read at public quarterly meetings by the Superintendents themselves. Then, too, there was a zeal, leading teachers frequently to visit their pupils of any age, and even to ask what should be done for the other members of the family. Then, too, a school must not only flourish, but colonize: others must come from it, or be established by it; as the Howard and New North Sunday Schools came from, or were gathered by, the Hancock. When that spirit flagged, notice what a difference. In 1850 — when, theoretically, Sunday Schools are, and for years have been, universally popular — there are in Boston 18 schools, an increase of but six in fifteen years; 2635 pupils, an increase in the same time of only 753; and 377 teachers, an increase of but 46. Is there not something wrong in this? It will doubtless be said, "The number of our societies has not rapidly increased. We have a Sunday School to each congregation." But may it not be answered, that more new societies would have sprung into existence, and old ones have been essentially strengthened, if greater zeal had been manifested

here? Let that, however, pass; the objection is then worth nothing. The Hancock, Franklin, Howard, and other Schools came into existence independent of societies. There were children who needed religious instruction, and therefore they were found, and gathered into schools. Other denominations have caught that early zeal of ours, and have not allowed it to die out; hence their increase. It does not take many years for a Sunday School to become a congregation. We are so exceedingly liberal, that we allow the sinful and the errorist to carry off the prize, while we fold our arms in self-conscious orthodoxy. Would it not be well for the Society, which changed its name from the "Boston Sunday-school Society" to "Sunday-school Society," for the purpose of extending its Christian fellowship, to return, if not to its first name, at least to its first love and field of labor, and ask again for reports from Superintendents and quarterly meetings? And may not this apply to some extent to other parts of the Sunday-school field beyond the city? We should not despond. No; God forbid that! Our success in the past forbids it; but, having "run well," shall we now be "hindered"? I say we should not despond; but should we not *awake*? Having the purest views of God, of Jesus, and of Christianity, and therefore the most powerful means of saving souls, shall we hesitate to push our efforts beyond the most zealous?

Sect. IV. — Publications.

The Society not only proposed to increase the number of schools and scholars, but to employ some means of elevating the character of books for Sunday-school libraries and children's reading; also to publish or reprint good manuals and the like. In this the Sunday-school Society,

as a society, has done comparatively nothing; and yet, by infusing the true Sunday-school spirit into the minds and hearts of the denomination, it has called forth just the books needed for libraries; also, in times past, at least one good Sunday-school paper, — "The Sunday-school Teacher and Children's Friend;" and, in times present, another, published at Worcester, "The Sunday-school Gazette," which should be in all our schools. Manuals and Question Books have not been wanting. There are just published seven most excellent works of this kind. The names of their authors (viz., Rev. George W. Briggs, S. G. Bulfinch, Rufus Ellis, Edward E. Hale, F. D. Huntington, John H. Morison, and Dr. Peabody) are sufficient to commend them to the notice of all superintendents and teachers; but the works themselves will do more. These new manuals are arranged in concert, and upon a progressive plan, carrying the child from earliest Sunday-school life to the time that he graduates into the adult classes. They are, if not the best, certainly among the best materials for a regular Sunday-school education which have been presented. To use them properly, they demand of the teacher previous preparation, which is, in any manual, a great virtue. Hymn and devotional books have not been wanting, as those prepared by Hon. S. C. Phillips, and L. G. Pray, Esq., bear ample testimony; so that, if the Society as a society has not sent forth much, still, through the individual members thereof, it has done well. But the Society itself has done somewhat since it ceased to print for itself. Occasional tracts for teachers and children have appeared, and been widely circulated. Sermons preached at its request, and Annual Reports and Addresses, have been printed in large editions, and scattered by thousands all over the land.

Sect. V. — Meetings.

Another mode by which the Society has endeavored to increase an interest in Sunday Schools, — and a very fruitful one, — has been its meetings. For many years, quarterly meetings, such as have been alluded to, were held regularly in this city, and did much, very much, towards the great work. These quarterly meetings were continued with great success for fifteen years, or until about 1842, when the Teachers' Social Union was formed.

This Social Union was a monthly gathering of teachers, and has held its exceedingly interesting and profitable meetings for discussion until the last and present years. During the last year, it changed its name to the "Sunday-school Teachers' Institute," as was described in the last Report of this Society, and has finished a similar course this year; the only change being, that, instead of a lecturer and conductor taking charge upon the same evening, they have alternated. The present course has been as follows: —

Lecturers.	Subjects.
1. Rev. F. T. Gray	The Duties, and Incentives to Duty, of Sunday-school Teachers.
2. Rev. R. C. Waterston . . .	Teaching Scripture by Illustration.
3. Rev. Andrew L. Stone . .	„ „ „ „
4. Rev. S. K. Lothrop	Paul and his Epistles.
5. Rev. J. I. T. Coolidge . . .	Jesus, and the best mode of presenting him to the minds of Children.

Conductors.	Subjects.
1. Lewis G. Pray, Esq. . . .	Teaching Scripture by Illustration.
2. Rev. C. F. Barnard	„ „ „ „
3. Rev. S. H. Winkley	How to accomplish the aim of the Sunday-school Teacher.

Besides these, the Institute has held four meetings entirely devoted to discussions. The last two of these four evenings — one an extra meeting, called for the purpose — have been occupied in discussing the subject of Mr. Coolidge's lecture, viz., "Jesus, and the best mode of presenting him to children." This has been a most successful course of meetings, and the friends of Sunday Schools have great reason to rejoice in the good influence which it has manifestly exerted. To return to the Society: —

Besides its quarterly meetings, the Society has held many special meetings, for the discussion of important topics arising in the progress of Sunday Schools. It has held, including the present, twenty-five annual public meetings, which have, more than all others, been meetings of the whole Society. The quarterly meetings, and the meetings of its co-worker, the Institute, were designed more for Boston and vicinity. The annual meetings have been supported by the presence, and made interesting and profitable by the voices, of warm friends from all parts of the country.

Among the most interesting of the special meetings called by the Society was that held in September, 1831, commemorative of the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of Sabbath Schools by Robert Raikes. Teachers of all denominations were invited to meet in this (Federal-street) Church, and a most eloquent address was delivered by Rev. Dr. Gannett. In 1835 Dr. Gannett delivered before the Society six lectures upon Christian Morals. "The interest taken in the lectures was manifested," says the next Annual Report, "by the very large number of persons who were present, and the deep and undivided attention paid to them." In February, 1836, a sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Channing, "in

which," says the next Annual Report, "subjects relating to Sunday Schools were fully discussed." This sermon was immediately printed, and widely circulated. In February, 1838, four lectures were delivered before the Society, as follows : —

Lecturers.	Subjects.
Rev. Dr. Walker	The Idea of God in the Minds of Children.
Rev. Mr. Thompson	Piety in Children.
Rev. Dr. Gannett	Faith essential in all Religious Teaching.
Rev. Mr. Upham	The Power, Dangers, and Benefits of Sunday Schools.

"These lectures were of a high order. They were given before large and attentive audiences, and evidently contributed much to the means of religious culture now furnished our Sunday-school teachers."

At one Annual Meeting of the Society, that of 1840, instead of the usual addresses, a sermon was preached by Rev. R. C. Waterston on "The diffusive nature of Christianity." "It was full of rich and valuable thoughts, glowing and pertinent imagery and illustrations, and an exposition of the value of Sunday Schools to the church, the parents, the teachers, and the pupils." This sermon was printed, and widely circulated.

It will be seen, that, out of these thirteen lectures and sermons, Rev. Dr. Gannett has delivered eight. During the last year, he also delivered to the Institute one not easily to be forgotten. It is proper that his constant, prompt, and untiring kindness in this respect should be gratefully acknowledged.

This Society, if it has done nothing else but hold its quarterly, annual, and special meetings, has great cause of rejoicing. Through these there has gone forth an enlightening and sanctifying influence, very essentially affecting

the interests of our Sunday Schools, especially those of this city and vicinity. Could some way be devised by which more not now engaged in this work could be similarly moved upon, and so brought into its field of labor, the present deficiency of teachers would be supplied, and much good would be accomplished. It may not be improper here to ask, if some way cannot soon be opened by which an annual meeting or general convention of Sunday-school teachers and friends of Sunday Schools may be held in other parts of the country, besides the city; so that many persons, unable to be present here on anniversary week, or wearied by its excitements, might be blessed.

Sect. VI. — Agents.

The principal feature of the Society's present operations is its agency. In the spring of 1830, the Recording Secretary, Rev. Mr. Gray, made a tour through a portion of the Union, visiting many Sabbath Schools; and not only learned many facts, but infused new interest into those visited, and awakened fresh energy in the minds and hearts of members of this Society at his return. In 1840 the question of appointing an agent to make similar tours in the New England States was discussed, and Rev. R. C. Waterston was chosen to visit the schools of Franklin County; and faithfully did he discharge his duty. "During an absence of but twelve days, he obtained reports of the condition of eighteen schools, and made thirteen addresses. From letters since read, we learn that the labors of Mr. W. were abundantly successful. Hearts were cheered, faith was increased, and universal approbation was expressed, accompanied by an earnest request that similar visits might be repeated. The blessing of God evidently crowned this endeavor. The Directors were hence induced to appoint a permanent agent, who

should visit the schools, in person or by substitute, whenever application was made for his services."

Rev. F. T. Gray was their first agent. He served for one year. During that time he travelled nearly 1200 miles, — visited 28 Sabbath Schools, in which were 4033 children and 658 teachers. The next year there were associated with the agent other clergymen and five laymen. These agents have, for now twelve years, accepted invitations, when practicable, to all Sunday Schools and Sunday-school gatherings and teachers' associations, and have even conducted the Sunday service when having reference to their mission. They have preached sermons, made addresses, given general lessons, held familiar conversations with teachers upon their work, and readily done whatever an opportunity might offer to awaken fresh zeal and increase intelligent activity in this work. Nor has this, like publishing books, passed out of the Society's hands, or, like the quarterly meetings, given place to a successor; but it is still as popular and useful as at first. The only difficulty in this department has been to supply the numerous demands, especially for the Sabbath services. For the ensuing year an unusually large number of associate agents have been appointed; and it is hoped that hereafter not a call may be unanswered. Five of these agents report that they have this year visited forty-two places, viz.: Athol, Boston (several schools), Beverly, Boylston, Bridgewater, Bath, Brighton, Burlington, Vt., Brooklyn, N. Y., Cambridge, Concord, Mass., Charlestown, Dorchester, Dedham, Deerfield, East Lexington, East Bridgewater, Fall River, Fairhaven, Groton, Kingston, Lowell, Leominster, Lexington, Milton, Medfield, Manchester, N. H., Northfield, New Bedford, Natick, Providence, Plymouth, Quincy, Roxbury, Salem, Springfield, Scituate, Sharon, Saco, Templeton, Warwick, and

Wilton, N. H., and delivered forty-seven addresses. One agent remarks, "I have addressed two other denominations in their Sunday Schools. In one instance there were over two hundred children belonging to the school, and forty teachers, *every one of whom was present, although it was a stormy day.*" Such a school is receiving, and will continue to receive, rich blessings from God. Why may not each school in our denomination tell an equal story? — or, what is far better, do an equally good work? Simply because we are not willing to labor for it.

We cannot omit to say a word here concerning the Sunday-school children's Minister at Large, Mr. Barry. He was appointed three years ago to labor among the destitute children of Boston. He has this year received from the various Sunday Schools over $700. He has made 1200 visits, and received a great number of callers. Not far from 190 children, from five to seventeen years of age, have been provided with homes in the country, a number of which have been adopted. He has a Sewing Circle of 150 children; also a Sabbath School. He has held temperance and prayer meetings, visited the Jail and wharves, and has distributed many tracts. Every child who has given a cent to this object must rejoice in the good accomplished thereby. Surely all will say "Amen," when we pray, God bless this noble mode of saving exposed children!

The funds of the Society for the past year have been derived as follows: From seven life-memberships, $70; forty-five annual subscribers, $45; contribution at Watertown, $2.50; which, added to a balance in Treasury last year, makes $237.64. The Society has expended $148.96, of which, $28.56 was in defraying expenses of agents; $80.40 for printing. A balance is left in the Treasury of $88.68.

CONCLUSION.

Twenty-five years have passed away! — and with them many a good man and true, whose prayers and counsels and labors were with us. Among these faithful ones none was more so than that venerable Vice-President, who for twenty years has honored us in holding that office, and who, since the last annual meeting, has completed his labors on earth. Thirty-four years ago, Mr. J. W. Foster was appointed Superintendent of Rev. Dr. Parker's (now the Rev. A. P. Peabody's) Sunday School, in Portsmouth, N. H.; and that office he held when God called him home. One question, discussed at a quarterly meeting of this Society, the year Mr. Foster was elected Superintendent, was, "The advantage our schools would derive, if all the male teachers would enter them with the determination to hold themselves ready to take the direction or superintendence of the school, if occasion should require." Methinks Mr. Foster entered upon his duties, determined to qualify himself, by fidelity on earth, to take the office, at his departure hence, of a ministering spirit from heaven, — at least, to the members of his school. Well has he succeeded in his object; nobly has he qualified himself for his promotion; and joyfully has he entered upon his work. To all Sunday-school teachers the voice comes, — Be ye, by equal fidelity, ready for a similar exaltation.

Twenty-five years have passed away! At the beginning of that period, some twenty or twenty-five schools were in existence; and now, at the close of it, 240 or

more have brought into their folds nearly 14,000 children, and between 2000 and 3000 teachers. Hundreds of meetings have been held; thousands of addresses have been made. Manuals, Guides, devotional books, and books for libraries, have been prepared and published; and between 60,000 and 70,000 volumes have been collected into libraries. Out from among the unnumbered thousands, who, during this time, have been taught, a vast company have joined the invisible throng. Of these many a teacher can tell of spirits, qualified by Sunday-school instruction to begin that race whose opening is bliss, and whose continuance is eternal life. Many remain, and have taken their places among men, and are doing the work which is blessing the world here and now, and which is preparing many to pass on to immortality. Let us labor and wait. In some respects we have done well; in many, there is vast room for improvement, — for more zeal, for greater effort. Encouraged by what we have done, let us go forward. I say encouraged, but by no means satisfied. Never should we feel satisfied as long as five children in any city, town, or village, of a suitable age, remain out of school; or as long as any youth, or adult of any age, whose situation will allow, is not in some relation connected with those institutions of religious knowledge. More than this: a mere connection, even of all persons of all ages, should not satisfy us. Never let us be satisfied, until each and all of these souls are regenerated, — joined to Jesus as the branch to the vine; and so, drawing their life from him, are, amid earth's tumults, filled with the peace of mind which passeth understanding; amid sin's deformity, made beautiful in holiness; amid self's destructive war, laying down their lives for others, and thus eternally preserving their own; amid indifference, cold-heartedness, blasphe-

my, burning in devotion to the great God of love, and so rendered sources of blessing to earth's sons and daughters, and eternally-joyful companions of angels in heaven. Then, and not till then, may we, as superintendents and teachers, be satisfied with our labors.

S. H. WINKLEY,
Corresponding Secretary.

Boston, May 26, 1852.

SUBJECTS OF DEBATE.

THE following Subjects of Debate are published with this Report, in the order in which they came up, from time to time, before the Society. They appear here for two reasons: first, for their historical value, — especially such questions as the fourth; and also in the hope that they might suggest to Teachers' gatherings topics for consideration.

1. The advantage our schools would derive, if all the male teachers would enter them with the determination to hold themselves ready to take the direction or superintendence of the school, if occasion should require.

2. In what manner may Sunday-school teachers contribute most effectually to the good of the families to which their pupils belong?

3. Advantages to be obtained from establishing new schools in every part of our city, town, or village, where teachers can be found to undertake it.

4. The subject of giving rewards, and passing censure openly; and what have been the results in schools in which this has been done?

5. The advantages of teachers' meetings, and the mode of passing the time at such.

6. To what number of scholars can a Sunday School be increased, to retain, at the same time, all the advantages which may be derived from them?

7. The comparative advantages of oral and memorative instruction in Sunday Schools.

8. Is it expedient and advisable for this Society to form a library for the use and benefit of the teachers?

9. What books are wanted in Sunday Schools; and wherein can improvements be made in those now in use?

10. Is it expedient for Sunday-school teachers to visit in the families of their children?

11. What are the objects which persons should propose to themselves to effect, in entering on the duties of Sunday-school teachers?

12. Is it, or is it not, expedient that Sunday Schools be kept twice on the Sabbath?

13. What mode can be adopted to increase the number of teachers in our Sunday Schools?

14. Are there any evils or dangers to be apprehended from the present popularity of Sunday Schools?

15. Is the influence of Sunday Schools on domestic religious instruction favorable or unfavorable?

16. What is the present condition of Sunday Schools connected with Unitarian parishes; and what can be done to increase their usefulness?

17. How can the intellectual faculties be early enlisted under the dominion of the moral?

18. How can the scriptural idea of Christ be most clearly imparted to a young mind?

19. Is sin, with its awful consequences and gospel remedies, presented with sufficient frequency and impressiveness in our Sunday Schools?

20. If spiritual culture be the highest of all culture, what aid should the Sunday School expect from parents and Christian professors?

21. How far should oral and textual instruction be united? What principles should govern us in the selection of text-books and Sunday-school libraries?

22. Are there not peculiarities in the present religious condition of the community, which call for extraordinary efforts on the part of Sunday-school teachers?

ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING.

The Sunday School Society celebrated its Twenty-fifth Annisary, Wednesday evening, May 26, in the Federal-street Church; Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, President, in the chair. After the singing of a hymn by a select choir of children, prayer was offered by Rev. James Thompson, D.D., of Barre. The Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Mr. Winkley, read the report, which took a retrospective and historical view of the association, spoke of its present condition, and paid a tribute to the memory of Deacon John W. Foster, of Portsmouth, one of its Vice-Presidents. The following Anniversary Hymn, written for the occasion, was sung: —

We bring no gift of flowers,
No gems to deck thy shrine;
But, Father, with our infant powers,
We praise thy love divine.
Not Persia's fragrant rose could be
So sweet an offering, Lord, to thee.

Thanks that thy courts we tread;
Thanks that thy name we sing!
No gold and pearls before thee spread,
That earthly pride could bring
From rayless mine or ocean's floor,
Would add one treasure to thy store.

The heaving sea, the star,
Mountain and stream and hill,
All that we have, and all we are,
Flow from thy sovereign will;
And oh! the matchless love that gave
Thy Son to die that he might save!

Father! with glad acclaim
Our feeble voices blend
To praise anew thy hallowed name,
Through Christ our Guide and Friend;
And may he lead us home to thee,
When death hath set our spirits free.

H. J. L.

The President remarked, that, since this anniversary had a peculiar interest as being the close of a quarter of a century

since the formation of the Society, some gentlemen connected with it from its formation had been invited to speak. In answer to his call, —

Rev. A. R. Pope, of Somerville, came forward. He spoke of having been connected with the oldest Sunday-school in this city, — than which there had been no better, — that first collected out of, and then brought home to be cherished by, the West Church. He referred to the Society as now having a life which contains a history from which to draw light and instruction for the future. It was difficult to tell the amount of influence that had been exerted. At this season of year, when all around is springing up in newness of growth and beauty, we can perceive something of the effects of the showers and the sunshine. But the analogy would not quite apply to this institution, whose results are necessarily to such an extent invisible. Still something can be seen. At the inception of Sunday-schools, the anticipations were too sanguine perhaps, and promises in their behalf too large; and so there may have been a degree of disappointment. It was expected that in many, if not in all cases, the child would pass, as it were, from the baptismal font to the class, and from thence to the Lord's table. This we had not wholly realized. The one hour of sabbath instruction had been obliged to contend with the adverse teachings of the six days of the week, and so could not certainly shape and stamp the character. But again and again our hearts had been gladdened by knowledge of what was accomplished in some instances; and these instances were proof that more good was done than we were permitted to see or measure. — Mr. Pope illustrated his thought by a neat and pertinent reference to the fire-alarm telegraph. The electric current is ever flowing steadily and unseen. But break it, and immediately is the warning and wail of danger sounded. So, were the hidden spiritual influence of the Sunday-school checked or interrupted or destroyed, the evil and peril would be soon manifest. He closed by congratulating the Society on its age, and urging that the work its members were to do must be done in faith.

Rev. O. C. Everett, of Charlestown, spoke as one of the first members of the Society, to bear a heartfelt testimony to its use-

fulness, and the zeal of those who had conducted its operations. He dwelt especially upon the good done by its agents, as they were sent forth to encourage the hearts and strengthen the hands of those laboring at a distance and alone. He, in former years, had been blessed by the visits of these Christian friends; and trusted that this kind of action on the part of the Society would be continued. He seconded the motion for the acceptance of the report, which was passed unanimously.

Rev. John Cordner, of Montreal, spoke of the importance of the Sunday School; first, to the individual, and second, to Society. Under the first head, defining the church as composed of all good and true believers, he argued that the church should take charge of the religious education of the young, even as the State did of their intellectual education. Under the second head, he showed that social evils came from ignorance and vice; and that, to regenerate the world, individual souls must be Christianized. Each generation comes forward, fresh and new, to be taught and improved. By taking care of each generation in time, much could be accomplished. The arrangements and fidelity, though not the objects, of the Romish Church, in this regard should be imitated. This seeks to make Catholics: the Universal Church should seek to make Christians. — Mr. Cordner's remarks, of which we give only a hint, were earnest and practical; and he eloquently enforced the duty that the followers of the Good Shepherd should, like their Master, take the lambs in their arms, and bear them to the green pastures of truth and the still waters of peace.

Gov. Boutwell felt that what he should say might be too general for the occasion, since some years had elapsed since he had had experience of the Sunday School, as scholar or teacher. He referred to Sunday-school instruction as religious education, and religious education as part of all education, which was a great system, having in view the right development of the physical, intellectual, and moral nature, to form the perfect man. He spoke of the sad instances the world had known of mental greatness, connected with moral delinquencies: to remedy these, religious instructions from the fire-side to the pulpit are wanted. His Excellency closed by remarking upon the progressive charac-

ter of the cause of education, which was to be carried on by obedience to fixed laws. As yet, no system was perfect. This Society had done much good, and there was room for it to do more. If we only knew the combinations of causes, we could predict results as surely in the moral as in the natural world. In the latter, science is helping us every day; and it will be so in the former.

Rev. F. W. Holland, of East Cambridge, spoke, by request, of the new series of Manuals, just prepared and published, which he regarded as of a great merit, and supplying a long-felt want.

In answer to a call from the President, Rev. A. P. Peabody, of Portsmouth, N. H., paid a feeling and filial tribute to the Christian worth of the late John W. Foster, whom he regarded rather as his pastor than his parishioner. He held him up for imitation as the faithful teacher, who entered upon and continued his labors with a love for souls, — being always and everywhere the religious guide and friend of the children of his charge, and increasing in earnestness and zeal up to the very last.

Hon. J. C. Park rose simply to state a fact. He had recently learned that all the Jewish children in this city went every evening to the synagogue to receïvē one hour's religious instruction. He had asked the Rabbi how long this had been the custom? The reply was, — "It came from Jerusalem." He thought we had yet something to learn in regard to Sunday Schools.

The President made a few earnest and appropriate remarks, urging thankfulness for the past, and fidelity for the future. The Benediction was given, and the assembly dispersed. — *Christian Register*, *June* 5, 1852.

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